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To author [illegible] D. Williams

EGERIA,

OR

ELEMENTARY STUDIES

ON THE

PROGRESS OF NATIONS

IN

POLITICAL ŒCONOMY, LEGISLATION,

AND

GOVERNMENT.

Non fingendum aut excogitandum, quid Natura ferat et faciat, sed inveniendum est. BACON.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES, STRAND,

BY A. WILSON, WILD-COURT.

1803.

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PREFACE.

SEVERAL of the Essays which form this Volume, were published at irregular periods while the Author was on the Continent, in the Autumn of 1802, and the commencement of 1803.

Bentham was at Queen Square Place during part of 1802 & Spring of 1803

This is mentioned as an apology for incorrectnesses, and errors of the press, which might not have escaped him; and particularly for an apparent inattention to several Publications in England, of considerable merit, on Finance, Population, Colonies, and other subjects, here rapidly glanced at, of

 which

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which the Author had then no knowledge. He chose the form of short periodical Essays, in the hope that Members of the British Legislature might be induced to study them; to transfer a considerable portion of their attention from the intrigues of domestic factions, and the spurious species of eloquence it produces and supports, to those general principles of legislation, those truths of political œconomy, and those relations and laws of nations, for the neglect of which they are commonly reproached.

That the Author would have succeeded, in a considerable degree, in a period of tranquillity and peace, he had reason to expect from the reception of the first papers: but WAR drew all attention to itself, and to its immediate dangers. Those dangers will be diminished, or they will be increased, as the Members of the Legislature may be or may not be, induced to attend to their causes,

causes, in many of those perversions of truths and principles which are exposed in these STUDIES.

In 1789, all Europe was in the condition of the *malade imaginaire*; affected truly by several slight disorders, but supposing itself sinking into annihilation, under the pressure of all possible and incurable diseases.

Among the most calamitous of those evils, was the perpetual recurrence of WAR; and the empirics who were elevated into fame by the general folly, had recourse to WAR as the UNIVERSAL REMEDY.

By that dreadful evil, the institutions of Europe, perfect and imperfect; those which were strengthened by the difficulties of their origin, and those which, by furnishing impediments, were necessary to that strength, have been involved in indiscriminate ruin; on which a despotism is erected,

the

the most unlimited and destructive that has ever appeared among men.

Britain has had its portion of this malady, and some inclinations to try the remedy; but from its good fortune, from its separate situation, and from the efforts of its government, it has escaped the full effect of the contagion.

The monster, which has whitened the Continent with human bones, by professions of forbearance and peace, lulled Britain into a temporary repose, from which she has been rouzed by indications of unceasing hostility, the proofs of a design, which had never been abandoned, of involving her in the common slavery and misery of Europe.

At such a time, it may require some deliberation, whether the Author shall pursue his plan, illustrating his observations by events as they arise, or suspend it to a more favourable season.

The

The British Legislature is summoned * on an occasion which requires the deliberate and anxious consideration of every Member of it.

If these STUDIES should obtain attention, it may induce other and abler Writers to afford their assistance, to withdraw the legislative and public mind from the contests of interested parties, and the low and rancorous ribaldry of personal satire, and to elevate it to the awful exigency of the moment.

* November 2, 1803.

ERRORS.

Page	70	Line 13	*For* noes,	*Read* nodes of nerves.
	76	—— 15	—— proportionate,	—— proportioned.
	77	—— 4	*Read* hypotheses are principally or wholly, &c.	
	—	—— 12	*For* Gallilio,	—— Galileo.
	84	—— 20	—— have,	—— has.
	103	—— 5	—— defining,	—— defiring.
	112	—— 15	*Add* and.	
	132	—— 24	*For* Machival,	—— Machiavel.
	135	—— 23	—— thofe,	—— the.
	145	—— 8	*Dele* often.	
	160	—— 23	*For* republics,	—— governments.
	177	—— 8	—— philosopher,	—— philosophers.
	181	—— 11	—— until she had acquired,	—— until she acquire.
	182	—— 17	—— of riches,	—— of the riches.
	220	—— 4	—— the,	—— thy.
	221	—— 4	—— by,	—— of.
	274	—— 17	*Dele* deemed.	
	283	—— 10	*For* Prussians,	—— Russians.
	288	—— 15	—— returned,	—— retired.
	301	—— 10	—— gaoler,	—— goaler.

Exhibiting the Prices o, at different Periods, from the Conquest to the present Time; deriv of Money, according to a Series of Intervals of 50 Years, for the firs

	IMES.								
			reciation of Money according to the price of				Mean Appreciation by Interpolation.		Equivalent Sums at different periods.
Year of our Lord.	Wheat 1 per bushe	Horse.	12 miscellaneous articles	Meat.	Day Labour	Mean of all.			
	s. d.	£. s.					A. D.		£. s. d
1050	0 2¼	1 17	....	....	....	....	1050	26	2161 10 8
		89	42	....	....	26	1100	34	
1150	0 4½	0 12	....	....	....	....	1150	43	
1250	1 7¾	1 11	....	....	....	....	1200	51	
1350	1 10½	18	....	....	....	....	1250	60	936 13 6
		43	56	....	75	77	1300	68	
1450	1 5	.....	....	....	....	....	1350	77	
1550	1 10½	2 2	....	....	....	....	1400	83	
		100	100	100	100	100	1450	88	
1600	4 0½	.....	....	....	....	....	1500	94	
1625	4 11	.....	....	....	....	....	1550	100	562 0 0
1650	5 6	.....	....	....	....	....	1600	144	
1675	4 6	5 10	....	....	....	....	1650	188	
		250	239	166	188	210	1675	210	
1700	4 9½	.....	....	....	....	....	1700	238	
1720	4 4½	.....	....	....	....	....	1720	257	218 13 6
1740	3 8	10 0	....	....	....	....	1740	287	195 16 4
		476	434	266	250	287	1750	314	178 19 7
1760	3 9¾	14 0	....	....	....	....	1760	342	164 6 6
		667	492	400	275	342	1770	384	146 7 1
1780	4 5½	.....	....	....	....	....	1780	427	131 12 3
1790	.....	.....	....	....	....	....	1790	496	113 6 1
1795	7 10	19 0	....	....	....	....	1795	531	105 16 9
		904	752	511	436	531			
1796	9 7½	.....	....	....	....	....			
1797	6 6	.....	....	....	....	....			
1798	6 2½	.....	....	....	....	....			
1799	8 3¼	.....	....	....	....	....		562	100 0 0
1800	14 6	22 0	....	....	....	....			
		1047	991	888	550	800	1800	800	70 5 0

A TABLE,

Exhibiting the Prices of various Necessaries of Life, and those of Day Labour, in Sterling Money, and also in Decimals, at different Periods, from the Conquest to the present Time; derived from respectable Authorities: the Depreciation of the Value of Money; the Mean Appreciation of Money, according to a Series of Intervals of 50 Years, for the first 600 Years; and during the present Century, at shorter Periods, deduced by Interpolation.

THE PRICES OF VARIOUS ARTICLES AT DIFFERENT TIMES.

Year of our Lord.	MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES. Wheat per bushel	Cattle in Husbandry. Horse.	Ox.	Cow.	Sheep.	Hog.	Poultry. Goose.	Hen.	Cock.	Butter per lb.	Cheese per lb.	Ale per gallon.	Small Beer per gal.	Mean depreciation from these articles.	Beef and Mutton per lb.	Labor in Husbandry per day.	Depreciation of Money according to the price of Wheat	Various miscellaneous articles	Meat.	Day Labour	Mean of all.	Mean Appreciation by Interpolation.	Equivalent Sums at different periods.
	s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	d.	s. d.	d.		d.	qrs.						A. D.	£. s. d.
1050	0 2½	1 17 6	0 7 6	0 6 0	0 1 3	0 2 0	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1050	26 2101 10 8
		89	20	37	29	36								42	.....	.....	16	42	.....	.....	26	1100	34
1150	0 4½	0 12 6	0 4 8½	.....	0 1 8	0 3 0	.....	0 3	...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 2	.....	...	...	...	...	1150	43
																						1200	51
1250	1 7½	1 11 0	1 7 0	0 17 0	0 1 7	.....	1 0	0 3	0 4½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1250	60 936 18 6
1300	1 10½	18 4	1 4 6	0 17 2	0 2 7	0 2 6	0 9	0 2	0 3½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1300	68
		43	66	106	61	45	75	24	31	.....	.....	.....	.....	56	.....	.....	100	56	...	75	77	1350	77
1400	1 5	.....	1 15 8	0 15 6	0 4 11½	0 5 1	0 6½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 3½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1400	83
1450	1 10½	2 2 0	1 16 7	0 16 0	0 4 3½	0 5 6	1 0	0 8½	1 0	5	2	0 1½	1	.....	1 0½	0 4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1450	88
		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	.....	.....	100	100	100	100	100	1500	94
1550	1 10½																					1550	100 562 0 0
1600	4 0½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 4	2	.....	1 2	0 6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1600	144
1625	4 11	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2 0	.....	1 6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 6½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1650	188
1650	5 6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 4	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1675	210
1675	4 6	5 10 0	3 6 0	2 17 0	0 11 0	0 14 0	3 0	1 3	1 3	0 4½	2	0 8	2½	.....	1 3½	0 7½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1700	298
		250	184	345	256	254	300	182	125	90	100	530	250	239	.....	.....	246	239	106	188	210	1720	257 218 13 6
1700	4 9½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	0 10	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1740	287 195 16 4
1720	4 4½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1 0	3	.....	2 2	0 8	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1750	314 178 19 7
1740	3 8	10 0 0	8 0 0	7 7 0	1 0 0	1 15 0	3 6	1 6	1 6	0 9	3½	1 0	3	.....	3 0	0 10	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1760	342 164 6 6
		476	437	884	602	634	350	218	150	180	175	800	300	434	.....	.....	197	434	206	250	287	1770	384 146 7 1
1760	3 9½	14 0 0	8 10 0	7 0 0	1 7 0	1 15 0	5 0	1 10	1 10	10	5½	1 2	3	.....	4 2	0 11	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1780	427 131 12 3
		607	465	874	626	684	500	266	183	200	262	950	300	492	.....	.....	208	492	400	275	342	1790	496 113 6 1
1780	4 2.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1 2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1795	531 105 10 9
1790	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1795	7 10	19 0 0	16 8 0	16 8 0	1 18 0	5 8 0	3 0	1 6	1 6	0 11½	5	1 2½	2½	.....	5 4½	1 5½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
		904	800	2000	832	1000	300	218	150	230	250	960	275	752	.....	.....	426	752	511	430	531		
1796	9 7½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1797	6 6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1798	6 2½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1799	8 3½	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
1800	14 6	22 0 0	34 0 0	20 0 0	2 10 0	5 0 0	4 0	2 0	2 0	1 2	9	1 0	7	.....	10 0	1 10	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1800	562 100 0 0
		1047	1858	2500	1159	1818	400	290	200	280	450	1200	700	991	.....	.....	773	991	838	550	800	1800	800 70 5 0

Vide Sir George Shuckburgh Evelyn's Paper, Phil. Trans. Part I. 1798.

RESULTS

FROM THE FOREGOING TABLE,

VARIOUSLY STATED.

L.	*A.D.*		*L.*	*s.*	*d.*	
100	in 1050	is equivalent to	2161	10	8	in 1798
100	.. 1250	.....	936	13	6	.. ditto.
100	.. 1550	.....	562	0	0	.. 1798.
100	.. 1720	.....	218	13	6	.. 1798.
100	.. 1750	.....	178	19	7	.. 1798.
100	.. 1780	.....	131	12	3	.. 1798.
100	.. 1790	.....	113	6	1	.. 1798.
100	.. 1795	.....	105	16	9	.. 1798.
100	.. 1798	.....	100	0	0	.. 1799.
100	.. 1798	.....	70	5	0	.. 1800.
100	.. 1798	.....	60	0	0	.. 1802.

Depreciation of Money at different Periods.

A. D.	*L.*	*s.*	*d.*
1720	100	0	0
1750	80	0	0
1780	60	0	0
1790	51	0	0
1795	48	0	0
1800	32	0	0

L.	*s.*	*A.D.*		*L.*	*s.*	*d.*	
70	5	in 1050	is worth	2161	10	8	in 1800.
70	5	in 1250	.....	936	13	6	in 1800.
70	5	in 1720	.....	218	13	6	in 1800.
70	5	in 1780	.....	131	12	3	in 1800.
70	5	in 1790	.....	113	6	1	in 1800.
70	5	in 1798	.....	100	0	0	in 1800.

EGERIA.

FIRST STUDY.

MOTIVES TO THE UNDERTAKING.

The present period opens as the morning of a peaceful day. Europe has borne the buffets of direful storms, supported by high thoughts and great duties, which ennobled contumely, soothed its sorrows, and blunted the arrows of a wild and furious barbarism, whose pastime seemed to be affliction and death.

It is to prevent the recurrence of similar evils, that the Author would contribute his efforts. Bearing no part in the deliberations of those bodies which are considered as *constituting*, or at least *representing* the country, he can have but little personal weight. By influencing those who have, he may be of some utility.

Every thing, but the love of virtue and mankind, has lately checked all attempts to ascertain the principles of the most important of all the sciences: But the Author would be unworthy of any rank among the friends of humanity, if, at this time, when Europe seems to be recovering its disposition to reason, he could dispense with the duty of declaring his thoughts. He has hesitated, not from a diffidence of the cause, but of his own powers. "Nescio quomodo, dum lego assentior, cum posui librum, assensio omnis illa elabitur *."

It was one of the laws of Solon, that every citizen should take a part in all public questions. Such a law, like the unlimited liberty of the press, would be in favour of truth, if it were to allow of no exceptions; if the real opinions and the real attachments of all men were truly and fairly expressed.

This may not be a duty when the community is divided into parties, each having a specific interest, absorbing all private opinion, and the effect of all discussion. Such parties introduce a worse state of society than modern despotism;

* Cicero.

potism; as the human constitution may sustain less injury by the total loss of reason, than by the perverted or interrupted use of it.

In such a state, to record political facts, with all their modifications; to seize the circumstances of resemblance with candour and impartiality, in order to discover those principles of connection, on which a real theory may be founded, would require the Author to be patient of self-denial, calumny, and sometimes oppression; impassioned for real, but future glory, and despising present praise. Newton says, in his letter to Bentley, "If I had foreseen the weight of opposition that has arisen against me, I would have left to others the pursuit of an empty shadow." There is but one philosophical truth universally interesting to man, *the progress of societies in political economy and legislation.* But this object is nearly excluded from the general and practical systems of modern education. Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle taught the principles of legislative philosophy, in a manner which would be extremely useful to the statesmen, legislators, constitutional architects, and patriotic reformers of the present time.

The discovery of a mechanic power; of detached truths in natural philosophy or chemistry; the establishment of a manufactory; the formation of a good law; or the discovery of a new expedient in finance—are the general claims of the present period to philosophic honors and fame; but, on due reflection, they must appear unimportant, compared with inquiries concerning systems of legislation, and the structures of political constitutions; the objects of all the sober and wise votaries, of what has been stigmatised as the philosophy of politics.

"But the difficulties have been proved insoluble." The French revolution has offered problems difficult to solve; and the combinations of opposing interests, and the complications of its errors and evils, would have rendered even their demonstration of no immediate utility.

The principles of society, in the present condition of mankind, are certainly abstractions; but not those of metaphysical fancy: they are formed from the laws, by which all men develop the powers necessary to their destination; and we must appreciate those laws in the first economies, in savage, pastoral and agricultural combinations,

binations, to obtain true principles. That discoveries in this science have been rare, is owing to their dependance on a succession or chain of truths, the first links of which have been sunk in long inutility, or perfect darkness.

The dependance of political phenomena, on any common or general principles, is not accurately and scientifically stated in history; and the *Esprit de Loix* is the only work in which reason professes to generalize political facts. But its immortal author is often reduced to the expedient of defining a problem by a problem; and his authorities seldom form a chain of reason and truth unsusceptible of violence and injury.

His general corollary or inference is a prudent maxim, not an immutable law, of political conduct, "that nations can be saved only by the recovery of their principles."

It is demonstrable that nations have abandoned their original principles with great advantage, but not without great hazards, and not without great obligations, either to what is called fortune, or to the coincidence of peculiar talents, and peculiar situations.

The power of imagining possibilities, and

comparing them with facts, and with each other, is the character of inventive genius. This is evident in all gradations, from the processes of a Newton, producing a revolution in the intellectual world, to the wild expedients of political fanaticism; which commences its career, by pressing gradually the bloody drops on the brows of useful labour, and producing the voracious and insatiable monsters which consume even the sources of their own support.

It may be said, that "in attempting to break the barriers of oppression, reformers generally break those of society."

As the race of reformers is incessantly reproduced—as the disposition to visionary projects continues attached to superficial philosophers, to candidates for popular favor, and to political impostors of all descriptions, it is the principal purpose of the Essays to check, and to correct that disposition.

It cannot surely be yet forgotten, that, in the French revolution, premature attempts at high political improvements produced worse effects than the direct restraints of arbitrary power.

In the treatment of the human body, all sudden revolutions

revolutions are ineffectual or hurtful. Even habits of intemperance must be destroyed with caution. In the most improved practice, noxious stimulants are continued and diminished gradually. The serpent renews his skin, and the bird his feathers, by a gradual and delicate process. The political constitution is the serpent or the bird; and the reformer, who would strip him of his skin or feathers, would put him to death.

All constitutions, political as well as physical, have a double organization; one fundamental, the other superinduced. Changes and transformations may take place in the superinduced; seldom or never in the fundamental.

Even in despotism, which the Author abhors equally with any of his Readers, the arrangements and usages which actually hold the society together, are natural and necessary, and the terrors and fears of power and superstition are accessories. In a reformation, or renovation, the former must be preserved, the latter may be mitigated, and perhaps gradually removed.

The present sect of reformers act like the botanist, who should imagine all plants in the same

soil, with similar nourishment, must be the same in forms and properties. And when they are deranged or receive injuries, they would not allow the time and means to restore or renew the disordered parts. Eight or ten years are often necessary to produce certain salutary effects on the organization of a tree. All plants and all animals destined for duration must grow and undergo changes gradually. Quod cito fit, cito perit. The reproduction of entire organs in animals is still more analogous to efforts at political restoration, which presumption snatches from the cautious hand of modest philosophy. Fishes reproduce their scales; reptiles their skins; and birds their bills and feathers; and the more perfect the renovation, the greater the duration of life. Reformers, instead of attending to the utility and beauty of these processes; instead of favouring and cherishing the capacity of a state, like that of an animal or a plant, to regenerate injured or diseased parts by its own power, separate and dissolve all its parts by some acts of indiscretion and violence; set at liberty the most unprincipled classes of the people, without considering that the properties of communities,

ties, like those of all other bodies, are regulated by the nature of the masses of which they are composed.

This spirit of dissolution, is the genuine spirit of JACOBINISM, which spins the webs of Sophistry, and conceals truths from the common eye; whose faculties have in them cruelty as well as strength, whose hate is unquenchable, and whose intention is, that every drop of its venom shall be mortal. This spirit, in greater or lesser degrees, has pervaded all Europe, masked with the features of reform, and inflicted on political bodies, diseases, the contagion of which has been more afflicting to humanity than any animal disorders: and it seems to be propagated by the dreadful laws of contagion. If the Author be required to point out those laws, he candidly owns it is not in his power: those of animal contagion are not yet ascertained: the general disorder and desolation of Europe is, however, an indisputable proof that moral infections assimilate to their infernal essence all things they come in contact with, and that their activity is multiplied as they dispense horror, misery and death.

But

But experience in both cases has discovered checks and antidotes to those evils: and humanity must administer them without waiting for their analysis.

Preserving spirit of Nature, mild Philosophy! thou art the antidote to this spirit of destruction. To thee we must direct our wishes, and by thy suggestions we must regulate our dispositions and our measures. When NEWTON contemplated the errors of the intellectual world, he did not oppose frenzy to frenzy—he did not criminate and abuse the visions of DESCARTES, or involve himself in opposite reveries. He patiently considered the *modus operandi* of the celebrated VORTICES, the genuine types of Gallic systems of political philosophy. He instituted a series of propositions* and corollaries; and, while he overturned the general system, the mode of exciting vertical motion by the rotation of a cylinder or sphere on its axis in a fluid, was beautifully investigated, and the motion of every filament of the vortex was ascertained with mathematical precision.

It is a portion of this spirit the Author invokes,

* Principia, Prop. 51, 52, 53, &c.

vokes, to develop the intricacies of involuntary error, as well as to unmask the features of hypocrisy and imposture, in the political world. But it will be said, "the public sickens at the words THEORY and SYSTEM." Yet in every institution, even the most vile, there must be theory; and TRUE PHILOSOPHY, even in its speculations, will never offer any thing beyond the idea of a complete system belonging to an imperfect order of actual constitutions.

If it be estimated with probability that in three years the human body may be wholly changed, and consist of new particles, by political considerations of a similar nature, we shall discriminate the true and false ideas annexed to the word INNOVATION. We actually see that young states, like young children, live rapidly, and often change their component parts.

Old states, like old men, are not susceptible of frequent changes; and all tendencies to sudden alterations, are to them dangerous and alarming symptoms.

But all things in the political, as in the natural world, are in perpetual motion; and it is

the

the office of human wisdom, perhaps all it can generally accomplish, to favour all tendencies and dispositions from evil to good, and to check those from good to evil.

Difficulties also arise in political disquisitions, from the imperfections of *languages*. We have not yet acquired the power of transmitting by words the complex ideas of political science, as we do those of geometry and arithmetic. In tracing the laws of Nature, among the phenomena of political occurrences, it may be necessary to contrive analytical forms of expression, to exhibit changes hitherto without denominations.

"But political causes are superior to human reason. Events rule men, who seldom may be said to rule events."

This is not always strictly true. Men not only improve and profit by events, but sometimes create them.

"In the studies relating to political constitutions and philosophical legislation, all scientific principles are generally absorbed by *analogies*."

"Many

"Many of the errors of the French revolution were owing to analogies."

All nature is pervaded by analogies. Those adopted in France were often taken from romances*, seldom from nature, or from the ascertained facts of history; and they misled, instead of assisting the friends of the revolution.

The powers scattered around us, particularly those of the human structure and conformation, furnish models of all kinds of action and all forms of life. All the inventions and all the practical knowledge of man consists in copying those forms, or copying those who have copied them, either directly, or by analogies.

Whether we can render political analogous to sentient beings; acting from the influence of external causes, having a perception of those causes, and a consciousness of that perception? —Whether the MIND of a society, like that of an animal, may be so formed as to perceive, resolve, and act from the impressions and inducements of what may be called its body? are questions

* The Social Contract is a romance.

questions of great difficulty and great importance.

But mental cowardice only starts at mere difficulties*.

We use the terms public body, public spirit, and public mind; and the analogies of these terms influence the feelings and judgements of all men who are not grossly ignorant or actually deranged.

Political bodies barely or imperfectly organized, are impelled by force, like inanimate bodies, which are inanimate because they are unorganized.

The parts impelled feel and obey the stroke; but they have no re-action or perception as whole bodies, which seem in all cases to be the result of organization.

To these questions the Reader will be gradually led; and if the Author should not be able to command his assent, by demonstrations, in favour of political and civil liberty justly so denomi-

* Mr. Locke, and after him Dr. Price, decided these questions without solving any of their difficulties, and merely asserted "that societies should be self-governed."

denominated, he may, by those preponderances of probabilities, which form the common rules of judgement and practice for mankind.

To give the necessary unity and perspicuity to the whole work, he may be occasionally obliged, not only to allude to the observations of other writers, but to repeat his own.—The well informed Reader, if he be inclined to fastidiousness, should recollect that the candid allowance respecting treatises of considerable length, should be extended to political above all other enquiries; and while the Author is struggling with numerous difficulties, which nothing but the love of humanity could have induced him to encounter and determined him to surmount, the Reader should accompany him impressed with the sentiment, Verum opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.

The occasional freedom of his opinions and language, will not be blamed by those who shall understand and know him.

There is not a man, a class, or community in the world, which he would intentionally misrepresent or injure on any imaginable consider-

ation. If his opinion of his own abilities could accord with his wishes, he would assume the tone as he has all the principles of the FRIEND OF EUROPE. At home, he is attached to no party; he writes wholly to that public, to that nation, of which the king, the parliament, and the administration of the government, are the legitimate, and he hopes the faithful ORGANS.

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EGERIA.

SECOND STUDY.

ORIGIN OF SOCIETY.

THE English language, according to the Author's knowledge, will not furnish terms which approach nearer to his ideas of society, than those which express its origin and progress, as proceeding gradually from *physical* to *moral* existence.

The germs of all societies are families * ; the wants of which, and the offices supplying them, producing

* See the Mosaic history—Moses describes the earth as peopled from one family ; and the descendants of Noah existed many

producing the reciprocal sentiments of parental and filial affection.

Families are impelled to an union for security against the fluctuations of the seasons, against beasts of prey, and against human enemies, who seek sustenance without labour.

These generate the first rude ideas of power, and of justice; the latter of which is checked, kept dormant, and sometimes wholly absorbed by the former: hence the early prevalence of dominion by force *.

Competitions of interests, impulses of passions, or contentions of violence terminating in various species of balances, give precarious existence to those hordes of savages, which may be called physical societies. The wants of such societies are supplied by spontaneous productions, and they are strangers to the contrivances and arts which modify, improve, and multiply them.

To those arts we owe the birth of genius and

many generations as pastoral families.—Gen. chap. ix. ver. 19. and chaps. x. xi. xiii. xxxi.

* The history of Cain and Abel strongly illustrates this origin of dominion by force.

and folly, and of the first simple ideas of virtue and vice, which are coeval with the dawn of political and moral society.

Families, or hordes of families, subsisting on the spontaneous productions of nature, require large districts for their support, which they commonly desolate—that desolation limits what may be called the physical existence of such societies. Necessity and misery produce contrivances and arts, which, by increasing subsistence, increase population; which, in indefinite progression, multiplies wants, denominated artificial, which oblige men indefinitely to devise modifications, improvements, and multiplications of natural productions.

In these processes the human intellect is generated, and political society formed.

In society, as in man, the general intellect, i. e. the understanding of the society as a body, is developed, in exact proportion as wants are multiplied. The eye in darkness expands its pupil, as the necessity of that expansion is increased.

The intellect becomes active—multiplies its

own powers, by suggesting wants for which those powers might provide.—Wants, perhaps falsely called artificial, are the circumstances which awaken invention, and improve it indefinitely; raise man above an existence merely physical—above animal life, supported on the spontaneous productions of the earth; give him the faculties of a social being; lay the foundations, and suggest the improvements of political society.

Simple or savage life, though it be the early destination, does not constitute the happiness of man; the faculty of generation impels him to increase and multiply. Population produces labour, invention, subsistence, industry, and all the effects which require justice only to render political society happy. The multiplication of men cannot take place, without the multiplication of their wants, and their intelligence.

How the faculty of population, and the power of subsistence, act and react on each other; how, by a mutual stimulus, they produce mutual regulations—are questions of great importance. The private and public passions which interrupt and

and suspend the progress of reason, under this influence, furnish the principal subjects of the histories of nations, from the earliest condition of society to the present time.

Contentions and wars, whether of savage hordes, or of disciplined nations, assuming the honours of civilization, whatever may have been their motives and pretences, appear to have checked or vitiated this *regulated population*, the probable source of all political blessings.

Wants produce intelligence in proportion to their nature and number. Necessity, in all cases, is the mother of invention.

In institutions, where the general apprehensions of a deficiency of subsistence are precluded; of which colonies are instances, intelligence is proportionably precluded, and slavery is the general consequence.

The soldier and the slave, being provided for like tamed animals, exist, like them, with checked or stagnated talents, for others, not for themselves. Without some species of soldiery, priesthood, slavery, industry, or charity, to consume or dispose of the surplus produce of la-

bour, it is difficult to imagine how society could have passed from physical, into moral and political existence. The histories of all civilized nations prove they have made that transition. Without the means of disposal, there can be no regular surplus produce; there can be no civil society, properly so called; and no necessity for government. Families living on spontaneous productions, and even cultivating for mere support, constitute neither.

Numbers, however multiplied, are unavailing in the progress of society, without compression, arrangement, and activity. Villages and towns within certain limitations, and with certain institutions, greatly accelerate that progress. The greater the conflux of men, like the conflux of nerves, the fuller the life, and the greater the sensibility.

The ends of all societies, and their tendencies to improvements, like the destinations of men, are ever pointed out by the nature and number of their wants; and when villages and towns have been fixed, they become species of organs diffused over the body, communicating recipro-

cally with more or less intimacy, and creating a national feeling improveable into public opinion and public intellect.

In proportion as society becomes more complicated by these institutions, every member acquires more points of contact with every member, and with the whole of surrounding nature.

The society therefore by accumulating wants, accumulates a general sensibility. Its accessory arrangements and institutions assume either singly or by combination many of the functions of mechanic and organic powers, the emanations of which are public passions,—the good and evil of which may in time produce the sublime and blissful phenomena of public judgement, public reason, and public virtue.

This theory of the origin and destination of societies, though in many respects different from that of other writers, is so clearly deduced from history, that the Author does not think it necessary to produce proofs.

Montesquieu borrowed from Aristotle the idea of climate as producing distinctions of na-

tional characters*; but Montesquieu has greatly erred in confounding the essential objects of all constitutions, with the effects of climate on physical societies, which take from them only a secondary character.

The peculiar or secondary characters of all nations have also considerably depended on the greater or the less rapidity with which their population was produced and their wants supplied.

Hordes of savages, disunited by wars, continue from periods beyond the reach of history, as individuals, in what is called a state of nature, subsisting nearly on spontaneous productions. Their population being checked and bounded; their wants, their intelligence, their virtues and vices are all stationary.

Throughout the world, according to all its histories, situations affording productions, various in their nature and quantity, have varied the dispositions of men to develop their wants and capacities: but the great and essential objects

* Aristotle de Rep.

jects of society are the same in all situations, and under all the climates of the globe.

Beyond the immediate impression of wants; passions and desires superinduce a new species of activity and industry in the political body. The parts and organs of public passions, and their accurate mechanism and organic sources, are desiderata, or discoveries to be made, in political science.—Nations obey public passions, and men direct and sometimes create them; but on no certain or known principles.

The first and most important inventions for social communication, have had in them so much of the gradual and insensible effects of daily want and necessity, that the names of the inventors, if whole societies may not be called the inventors, have not been transmitted to posterity.

The signs of the articulations of the human voice, the combinations of which form all the words of all languages, are wonderful objects of contemplation to philosophers, when the languages arising from them are displayed in all their extensive powers and utility.——But in tracing

tracing accurately the progress of man, with such assistances as we now derive from a knowledge of the various conditions of nations, they appear to us to arise easily and naturally from his condition, his wants, and his desire of communicating and gratifying them.

Languages, the first means of communication between man and man, village and village, town and town, are immediate and partial instruments; hieroglyphics, writing, and printing are general; and they indicate different conditions of society, and passions and desires of different extent.

But the object of the Author, at this time, is to keep the attention of the Reader to the gradations of analogy between animal and moral bodies, which are equally susceptible, first of wants, then of passions; and which, in all probability, must be regulated and directed by similar principles.

Wisdom and virtue have similar effects on the political and physical body; and all irregular and excessive passions have similar analogies; communities having their mental imbecilities, their

their frenzy, and their mania. The effects of public passions are like those of private. Hope, joy, confidence, love, produce energy in the system. Fear, shame, and despondence, sink and debilitate; and the organization of public, as of private bodies, is deranged by vices, which act in the manner of deleterious powers.

In political, as in animal bodies, the gradual and indefinite development of desires and their gratification, under the direction of justice and virtue, is the development of understanding, morality and happiness; and in this sense luxury is a blessing.

But all processes have their true and false principles. False processes, in the same trains, and in the same gradations, produce diseased passions, vices, and crimes; and in these cases luxury is an evil.

In modern France, where the pride of grand actions has been throwing into shadows the errors and crimes of a dreadful revolution, the noble fanaticism of the sublimest views which were ever opened to a nation, were exalted into a species

a species of frenzy; and after a paroxysm of intoxication and fury; after the most criminal and melancholy sacrifices at the bloody altars of fear and terror;—a general torpor seemed to seize the heart and arteries of the whole nation; on exactly the same principles by which inordinate exertion occasions diminished action in the human frame.

Political, like physical bodies, appear to be susceptible of periods or circles in ideas and action, from the allotment of periods for the completion of certain purposes *. Both are affected by annual, lunar, hebdomadal, and diurnal habits.

Elective appointments are annual; literary occurrences monthly; religious transactions weekly; domestic and individual actions daily.

He must be a superficial observer of human life,

* All persons of moderate reflection, accustomed to the periodical recurrence of the symptoms of diseases, will comprehend this allusion, though they may not understand the causes of that recurrence. The analogy will hereafter be further noticed.

life, who does not perceive the good and evil effects of such periods or circles.

These views of society are important, as the author conceives them to be true; and particularly as those votaries of philanthropy, who incessantly attempt the production of changes, acquire great skill in availing themselves of public passions; like all adventurers who convert men to their purposes, by addressing themselves, never to their reason, but always to their passions.

The sagacious reader may anticipate the author's purpose, in directing his attention to a complicated detail of the springs and movements of political constitutions, for the explanation of which the human capacity has hitherto proved insufficient.

How presumptuous those who would take to pieces, in order to reconstruct such bodies, the produce of time and the operation of various laws of nature. Chymists, even those who seem to be reviving the extravagancies of alchemy, have not yet pretended to dissolve the human body into elements, in order to improve its construction and health.

It is in the treatment of the political body only such extravagancies are tolerated.—Who can calculate the good or evil occasioned by affecting a single movement in the structure of a state, which may have been centuries in acquiring, first its general sensibility, then its passions, and then the considerable or inconsiderable portions of judgement with which it is directed. In discussing questions of such magnitude, the random glances of romantic philosophy or of poetic fancy will not give the results of numerous and complicated facts, either for public utility, or for the satisfaction of minds accustomed to apply the arithmetic of probabilities to the occurrences of society, and to appreciate moral phenomena, and the quantity of good and evil with nearly mathematical precision.

EGERIA.

THIRD STUDY.

INEQUALITIES OF SOCIAL SITUATIONS.

Hobbes has asserted, that a state of nature must have been a state of war; and that the provisions of society are coercions to maintain peace.

The pride of man may be mortified by just views of his origin and early condition.

Eat or be eaten, is a law of nature nearly coeval with the injunction to "increase and "multiply."

Every class and order of animated beings seems competent from fertility to consume the productions of the globe, and to occupy its whole surface.

There are animals which produce young, insects which lay eggs, and fishes which spawn, so as to multiply annually by millions, if there were provisions for their security and subsistence.

Every class, as it were by instinct, seeks this security and provision which seems to be fully destined for NONE.

The first general movement, in obedience to this instinct, must have been the general signal of war. Where the terrific roar of the lion, who has desolated districts with unabated hunger, is silenced by living mountains of reptiles, to whom only a little sagacity is wanting to devour all living beings, and all the means of their subsistence.

Nature, which produces all the classes of animated beings, does not provide for the unlimited reproduction of any class. For where an universal warfare has allotted the general dominion, first to brutal, then to human force, it is felt that man, with the world before him, is soon checked in his reproduction by limited sustenance.

In the struggle and contention for the means of

of subsistence, the state of war may take place, which Hobbes calls the state of nature, and on the general principle of which he founds the claims of arbitrary government. Theories are suspected; facts should also be suspected.

If we allow, as we do, that, while reason was in her nonage, the contention for sustenance bestowed power on the strongest; if we allow that physical society must have been governed by physical strength; by thus ascertaining the actual origin of public force, we do not prove its perpetual claim to dominion. Are the objects of society ever to be, because they have been, decided by violence and murder, the instruments of which are generally selected from the most atrocious and abandoned of mankind?

Are the principles and practice of social economy to be developed, because the dominion of societies has been usurped, by sacking villages and towns, wasting fruitful districts, and throwing a sepulchral silence over the haunts of men, interrupted only by the moans of misery in the gripe of brutal force?

As reason slowly proceeds to maturity, the councils of experience and prudence are admit-

ted to influence the operations of force; and if, as society advances, it were regulated by talents proportionably improved, the condition of the world would be proportionable to its apparent destination.

But this seems not to have been ever the case, for reasons founded on the LAWS OF NATURE.

Men, in all conditions and in all societies, have felt a species of panic at the apprehensions of want; and, in the efforts of the most discerning, or of the strongest, to secure themselves and their posterity from them, we may trace the general sources of the distinctions of classes, and those various powers which arise from the various conditions of the general masses of societies, whose situation has ever verged on wretchedness, the mother of all crime.

It is in the impracticability, except in peculiar situations, of increasing food in proportion to the increase of population, that we discover the general sources of moral and political evils.

Political moralists and reformers, instead of observing with accuracy the repressing causes of a superabundant or of a vicious population,

instead

instead of studying a judicious choice, mitigation and direction of them; instead of marking the necessary or habitual proportions and balances of classes in societies, they have irritated, on all the occasions offered them, military force and military customs by random criminations; and they have been the principal means of inverting the scale of moral estimation in respect to human employments; of softening into honours the reluctant submissions of dependance, and of sanctifying pecuniary benefactions, which, however expedient, are always liable to censure from scrupulous and abstract moralists.

Sir James Stuart has fully developed * the doctrine of national population, as depending on the production of food; and he has traced many of the unavoidable inequalities in social situations, from the different occasions which must occur to parents more or less robust, and more or less prolific, of dividing with their offspring the productions of the earth, which never fully correspond with the utmost effects of the generative faculty.

 This

* Inquiry concerning Political Economy. B. i. chap. 3 & 4.

This is experienced, though not always understood, in the first associations or hordes subsisting on spontaneous productions; and, though the effects of labour and cultivation dissipate the apprehension for a time, it recurs when population and production are nearly balanced. If reason, and not passion, were the first effect of misery, it would interpose the maxims of justice against the first pretensions of force; it would, by a shorter process than that which actually takes place, favour the disposition of nature to produce equilibrium in moral as in physical situations, and would establish correct proportions in the wants and supplies of society.

An idea of these proportions is the origin of the CLAIMS OF RIGHTS which have been occasionally obtruded on the career of power.

But those who have asserted these rights have mistaken their nature, or asserted them without judgement.

They have generally termed them the equal rights of equal beings; whereas every just idea of correct equality is instantly superseded, at the formation of all societies—by the unequal

powers

powers bestowed by nature—by the unequal operations of the generative faculty, taxing the same labour with unequal burthens, and creating the distinction of rich and poor—and by all the indefinite though fair efforts of industry, in the alienations of the unequal surplus of equal labour.

Rights, like properties, though they may be balanced, cannot be equal; because the just proportions to every man's labour, industry and ingenuity, must be unequal.

Rights, however, should be equitable; and properties equitably or equably distributed.

But millions of hordes and societies, called civilized, have been or may be formed, and may consume or devour each other before the doctrine of what is called POLITICAL EQUALITY be generally understood, and reduced to practical equity.

A wise constitution would bring various men, as science may bring various weights, to an EQUATION, who can never be brought to an EQUALITY.

All claims should therefore be preferred for equitable or equable, not for equal rights; the latter being the portion only of slavery.

Every member of a wise and equitable constitution possesses his proportion of that influence which is diffused through the whole, as the influence of every member is diffused through the natural body, and to every particle of which it consists; not equally, but in proportion to its capacity of contribution to the general happiness.

But how distant are the common principles of pretended philosophy from these truths!

And how unavailing, how extremely hurtful, the random and intemperate claims of impracticable and unattainable equality!

Where is the society so constituted as to be on all occasions capable of embracing equally, in its political œconomy, even the physical wants and good of all its population?

After all the inquiries and bloodshed on account of political disquisitions, two problems remain unsolved at the very threshold of society, and respecting the mass or body of its consti-

constituents—of greater difficulty, and of infinitely greater importance, than any proposed in science by BACON or by NEWTON.

I. A method of proportioning the multiplication of all the classes of a people to the possibility of providing their food and employment. Or,

II. The method of rendering the provision of food and employment sufficient for an unrestrained population, or an unlimited exercise of the generative faculty.

Without the solution of these problems, great inequalities must necessarily arise in the conditions of men; and want and misery, which should only circumscribe societies, will penetrate and invade their laborious and useful classes.

Such problems are not even objects of attention, in the early stages of political society; and in those denominated civilized, no government or legislature has hitherto assigned their due importance to inventions and measures for the approximation of the increase of food to the unrestrained increase of population.

The history of society moves in a circle bounded

bounded by human misery. Spontaneous produce sustains population contending for that produce.

Population produces wants, desires and intelligence, to discover the means of cultivation; new sources of produce arise which do not extricate men from wretchedness while the sustenance is below the population: when it exceeds, or the population is below the produce, as is always the case in the early exertions of the arts of cultivation, and in the first progressions of colonies; industry arises; exchanges, trade, and commerce take place; and men appear to be in the road to unbounded happiness:—but the illusion soon vanishes. The generative faculty multiplies claims in alarming disproportion to the increase of productions by cultivation; and want, or the apprehensions of want, taking possession of all the classes of industry as well as those of labour, numerous avenues are opened to contention, injustice, violence, and reciprocal destruction.

These complicated evils, as they are more or less atrocious, produce governments of more or less severity. Some may have the characters of arbitration,

arbitration, and may appear to proceed from choice; some are modifications of actual force; some rest on opinions of present or future evils at the disposal of certain orders; some are mixed powers, having portions of all these passions: but they are all composed of passions balancing passions in the masses of the community to which they owe their origin: and the horror daily excited by the morning exercise of an emperor of Morocco, in striking off a certain number of human heads, is a check or balance to the atrocity of the Moorish character, as necessary to an abominable government, as the mild and equitable temper of the English executive power, to that willing and chearful obedience which the English pay to their laws.

The consequences of these reactions of passions, interests and powers, in the governors and governed, are various as the characters and situations of the communities; but in all, the genuine wants and desires of man, the sources and impulses of general intelligence, are unhappily but necessarily circumscribed; and some societies are so unfortunately constituted, that those desires and their gratifications are denounced as crimes to the laborious and industrious,

which

which are retained in animal stupidity for animal labour.

This is an humiliating and affecting view of any portions of human nature. But it will be seen in these Essays, that the principles and practice of modern reformers, the most moderate and best intentioned, would aggravate even these evils.

Hence the long, we sometimes think the hopeless continuance of human societies, in conditions susceptible only of passions, from the operations and counter-operations of certain classes and orders on each other.

When the mechanism or the organs of those passions in communities* are understood, PHILOSOPHY, by directing their utility, will moderate, perhaps terminate their abuse.

In the mean time, and in the present state of societies, we must consider them as analogous to moral beings, wholly actuated by passions, and directed by the views and interests of those persons

* It is hoped the reader will bear in mind, that the author never confounds public feelings, and the passions which govern communities, with those of individuals, which may be criminal in the best, and virtuous in the worst.

persons or classes in them, which have the power or the wisdom to regulate those passions.

To the maxim of Hobbes we may therefore add another of equal authority, that the first state or period of what is called civil society is generally a state of war.

In this period, every community is actuated by some predominant passion or passions; and all ultimate decisions are either made or influenced by force, or the apprehension of force.

That portion of intelligence, however, which surmounted all the difficulties of the transition from savage to civil life, from the predatory pursuit of subsistence to the cultivation of its means, never wholly abandons any of the subsequent conditions of mankind.

While absolute tyranny and pure superstition, which the author supposes to be in the provisions of Providence, analogous to necessary poisons in those of Nature, coerce and sway all primitive constitutions of civil government founded on public passions; that INTELLIGENT PRINCIPLE, the germ of future improvement, science, and philosophy, lies sometimes dormant, sometimes partially active; contending with

with the governing principles, and with the passions and prejudices of the governed, sometimes successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully; and proceeding through good and evil report, with slow but sure steps, in the stupendous plan of governing, not individuals only, but societies also, by the laws of reason and virtue.

When the author uses the word PHILOSOPHY, he is to be understood as referring to this principle, either in some or in all its modifications; and he is extremely sensible of the numerous inconveniences he must experience in the use of a term which has been prostituted to all purposes and all meanings.

Many of the most important provisions of society have been compromises between this immortal principle and the various passions, which have constituted either the governments or the spirit of societies.

This will appear through the whole of these Essays.

For our immediate consideration, those provisions first offer themselves, which probably afforded the first intervals of contention, violence, and warfare, when men determined on

cultivation, and to divide, by some permanent rules, the produce of their labour.

Here we must be satisfied with effects; for history, as usual, is silent on one of the most important inquiries of the human mind.

In China, a nation which makes the boldest pretensions to antiquity, the provisions against the prevalence of population, over labour and industry, seem to have been coeval with its first institutions.

The privileged orders are few; the emperor is by profession an agriculturist; the people are sober, laborious and industrious; and the soil is fertile: yet the population so much exceeds the produce, that parents are allowed to expose their children; and with this melancholy indulgence the lower classes are generally reduced to the verge of famine. There are shops where dogs, cats, &c. are sold for sustenance; and Chinese beggars feed on the vermin of their own bodies*.

In the vast districts of Tartary, subject to the dominion of the Lamas, the priests constitute the only privileged order, filling all offices, civil and

* Bell's Travels, vol. ii. p. 39, and 48.

and ecclesiastical; and with a disinterestedness, which priests only have exhibited, they are devoted to celibacy. Husbandmen, labourers, and artizans, propagate the species. This ancient institution is intended to diminish the sources of population, and it greatly diminishes those of general misery.

In southern India, where all orders propagate, parents bring their children for sale to public markets, or they expose, or they put them to death, with the connivance of their governments.

To evade these cruel duties, crimes and enormities, abominable to human nature, have taken place in all ages and nations.

In Thibet*, where the privileged order is also the priesthood in celibacy, the excessive population of the laborious and industrious classes is checked by polyandry, one female associating her fate and fortune with all the brothers of a family, without restriction of numbers or age.

As customs regulate passions, marriage, being renounced by the higher order, is considered, by all others, as a burthen, if not an odium.

In

* Turner's Embassy, p. 345, 6, 7.

In Turkey, Persia, India, &c. polygamy is an institution having similar effects with polyandry, and probably having its origin in a similar policy.

The Greek and Roman states were not often embarrassed with this general difficulty in the progress of societies; for their institutions were warlike, and they kept their population within bounds by military expeditions, and by colonies in conquered districts.

The Greeks were, however, obliged to allow the exposition of children; and Aristotle* considers it as indispensable.

Strabo† says it was a law in the isle of Ceos, that those above sixty years of age should take hemlock, to afford subsistence to younger persons; the country being fully cultivated.

Under the Roman dominion and tyranny, the population of the greater part of the world was held too low to produce a general demand from the wants of men.

Communities under despotism have always a feeble population; for tyrants, even the most stupid, seem to discern that as men disentangle themselves, they become more dense from num-

 bers;

* R. Geograph. l. x. † Tournefort, vol. ii. p. 18.

bers; their wants render them inventive; and acquiring intelligence as political bodies, they always and necessarily become free.

Modern states, under forms more or less feodal, possess numerous privileged orders; and the general policy of feodal chiefs has been to induce the common people to multiply, without attention to consequences; calculating possibly on the general effects of misery in favour of submission and servile obedience.

When the habits of the people have ensured their general misery, the privileged orders have felt that compassion which is the virtue of individuals, but frequently the reproach and stigma of governments; the first object of which, in every country, should be to regulate the proportions of its useful population and produce.

But feodal governments being generally warlike, and armies recruited by misery, a random population, occasionally running into excess, and relieved by war, want, famine, or even pestilence, suits their purposes, though it may not be in their deliberate contemplations*.

Under

* The Prince of Condé, contemplating the effects of a battle in the war of thirty years, exclaimed, "The strumpets of Paris will supply the loss in one night."—Schiller, vol. ii. p. 324.

Under these governments, influenced by the principles of christian benevolence, the institutions of public charities have originated; and their remains and imitations, often perverted and misapplied, are numerous and splendid: they are honourable to the characters of individuals, and they have proceeded naturally from the partial influence of christianity on the spirit of feodal systems, supported by chieftains whose prerogatives were monopolies against the classes of productive peasants and industrious artizans.

Those chieftains, while they deceived themselves, and sometimes imagined they evaded the justice of heaven by numerous and opulent institutions, repressed millions among the offspring of the labouring poor, striving in vain to preserve them above famine, by bestowing the privilege of preservation on children generally of doubtful utility.

There are institutions applauded for their charity, which, by relieving the vicious from the care of their children, enable them to produce more after their own image.

By such institutions, the first evil is never diminished, arising from numbers viciously educated.

The

The children themselves are passed into the mechanic classes, which are always rapidly and completely filled by demand and high wages; and in proportion to the splendour and success of such charities, additional difficulties and miseries are thrown on all those poor and deserving families engaged in productive labour, who strain every nerve to support themselves without assistance.

A sentiment is thus impressed on the whole community, which considerably checks its population: for who will contentedly or patiently struggle with all the difficulties of bringing up a large family to labour, under the discouragements of hospitals and workhouses, which however piously instituted and humanely conducted, it is to be feared are incautiously filled with the children of the profligate and the idle, who are withdrawn from productive labour.

In the formation of civil, as distinguished from savage society, there are other necessary causes of inequality, which may have been perverted by artifice and ambition into the sources of unjust and oppressive distinctions; but which, even without that perversion, must have committed states for some time generally and wholly to the direction and dominion of PASSIONS.

EGERIA.

FOURTH STUDY.

"No matter for your rights," said Sylla to Mithridates; "obey "implicitly, or make yourselves stronger than we are."

POLITICAL PASSIONS.

The internal arrangement or organization of savage hordes subsisting on the spontaneous provisions of nature, produces a considerable degree of intelligence; sufficient, in cases of great importance, to over-rule passion by counsel; to sustain a simple and general idea of justice; and, when extreme want has exhausted all spontaneous resources, to surmount the first

 difficulties

difficulties in introducing the appropriation of animals, and the cultivation of the earth.

In this new situation, the social feelings of political bodies become complicated; the passions formed by them, numerous; and societies being deprived of those aged counsels which tempered the violence of savage resolution, for age does not then possess the privilege and authority of experience, the first internal condition of pastoral and agricultural life becomes more perplexed and turbulent than that of savage hordes; and persons of strong passions and hasty determinations have not scrupled to prefer savage to civil society, as the happier condition of man.

The care of animals, and the cultivation of the soil, give the first ideas of property.

Invention, labour, and time are transferred by man to that care and that cultivation; and the subjects, whether animals or land, and their uses or effects, become PROPERTIES.

If invention, labour, and employment of time had only produced sustenance for those employed, society would have advanced but little by the art of cultivation.

But

But labour produced a surplus; and the property and command of superfluities became the great objects of contention in all the gradations of civilized society.

The first claims to superfluities must have been, by those whose talents found the means of producing them;—by aged parents and helpless infants;—and by those who, in defending their country from depredation, were rendered incapable of labour.

Such claims were succeeded by those of arts, real or imaginary, to mitigate or heal the disorders of body and mind.

How long the property and the disposal of it remained in the inventor and labourer, cannot be determined with any degree of probability; for there are no records of such subjects.

We know only, that the earliest societies which history has distinguished as civilized, had inverted the apparent order of nature, by transferring the disposal of surplus produce from the original proprietors, to persons and classes whose first offices must have been to preserve the peace.

Why the cultivators could not retain the poli-

tical power which always accompanies the general property, is a question not difficult, but not necessary here to determine. Perhaps the principal difficulty in it may be solved by recollecting some observations already made on population.

The first inventive and laborious cultivators, when they had appropriated certain portions of the general produce to their warriors and priests, considered what they had retained as competent to the purposes of unlimited population.

The error must have soon led them into difficulty and misery; and the soldier and priest avoiding that error, and converting the claim of support into a right of property, a contention necessarily arose, in which the cultivators sunk gradually into tenants and slaves.

If the original proprietors could have regulated their population by their means of subsistence, they might have retained the disposal of all surplus produce; but such a regulation could have proceeded from science only, the last acquirement of human society.

Men are united in communities by an indefinite variety of laws, each of them having cir-

cumstances peculiar to an individual society, as the ultimate particles of animal bodies are united by laws of animation, which have each of them peculiarities suited to individual constitutions.

Political, like human bodies, seem destined to rise gradually from irrational to rational life. In communities, as in men, the effects of impulse are extremely different from those of consciousness; and, in all first societies, the sources of general feeling have probably been external, and their actions produced by impulse or force.

The effects of portions of communities which may be called organic on those portions which may be termed inorganic; or the effects of governments on mere multitudes, or on incidental combinations speedily decomposed by their vices or by time, furnish no principles but those of force; and the earliest governments are therefore those of force.

At this time we know not either the combinations of principles, or the laws of attraction which produce irritability, the first property of animal life; much less do we comprehend that more complex organization, of which sensibility is the result. We perceive only homoge-

neous relations in nature which produce regularity of form.

The difference of IRRITABILITY and SENSIBILITY in animal bodies is a very late discovery.

In political science, though its effects must be immense, it is wholly overlooked. Let us hope a HALLER may arise in the political as in the natural world, and accurately ascertain this important difference. Our advances in social and political may then proceed further than those in physical knowledge, under the direction of an experience truly philosophic; we may ascertain the arrangements and combinations which, in any given cases, may produce public feeling, thought, reason, will, or, as it may be properly called, the PUBLIC MIND.

But the Author must not pursue these ideas in the present Essay. He wishes only to assign reasons, to be more fully explained in time, that societies are not immediately improved in their condition, in their conduct, or their principles, by the transition from a predatory to a pastoral and agricultural life; that the internal competitions of interests become more numerous, complicated, and hostile; that civil liberty, a blessing

ing enjoyed by savages in a considerable degree, is wholly lost in the first communities of pastoral and agricultural societies; and the intercourse of nations becomes as hostile as that of hordes, with the difference of being regulated at the pleasure of temporary or hereditary masters, instead of aged and parental counsels.

We see that vegetables and imperfect animals have few, imperfect, or no ideas, not only in proportion to their senses, but to the union of those senses in a common centre or sensorium—a vegetable, without a centre of union for its fibrils, would have no common sense of heat or cold; and the actions of closing its petals, and other modes of common defence and preservation, could not take place.

An animal is perfect or imperfect, as the nerves of all its frame are perfectly or imperfectly united in a common sensorium. And an assemblage of men is a political BODY, or it is not; it has a CONSTITUTION, or it has not; or, having a constitution, it is perfect or imperfect, as there is or is not a sympathy and connection, or according to the perfection or imperfection of the sympathy and connection of the sensorium with every individual of the assemblage.

The principle of this common feeling is unknown; so is that of gravitation: but we may hope the LAWS of the former may be ascertained, like those of the latter. Then, but not till then, will political philosophers be able to point out precisely those differences of constitutional structures which produce differences of sensibility, perception, action, and character in political bodies; which at this time no art can, with certainty, assimilate to the general objects of human society.

We now know only that savage hordes, however miserable, possess councils analogous to the animal brain, and that in the transition to civilized society they become destitute of those councils; that the small portion they possessed of self-government is exchanged for the government of force or privilege; and that, in a long succession of ages, they acquire only those properties which depend on passive organs, or constitutions analogous to those of animals which have no brain, and whose characters are determined by their irritability and their passions, not by their MINDS.

The Author, in this species of detail, does not pretend to interpose his opinion of WHAT OUGHT

TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE, in contrast to actual facts. Whether it be presumed that the universe is governed by an INTELLIGENT BEING, or by UNINTELLIGIBLE LAWS, it is probable that its fate is more desirable than if any system of philosophical reveries could have been substituted.

It is a fact, that societies, like animals, obey some GENERAL LAWS, which lead them as bodies from agitated infancy, into a turbulent youth, and thence in some cases into a reasonable and happy manhood. Philosophical empirics have pretended to improve upon or change these laws; but all their experiments have been injuries; the laws of nature have recovered their dominion; and they continue to produce, destroy, and re-produce the bodies of political societies, as they do those of animals, in indefinite varieties, and with all their characteristic perfections and imperfections.

The histories of all nations describe the effects of abortive efforts to counteract them. The consequences of gradual and general discoveries in them we may anticipate by probable and modest analogies, but we never anticipate them in practice without multiplying our miseries.

In

In Nature, when the interpretation is once justly made, the advantage is obtained. In the vicious policies produced by checking or correcting her progress, the cyphers of false philosophy or of imposture may seem to make sense, without giving her meaning.

Produce, population, wants, passions, habits, and intelligence, with all their trains of conveniences and inconveniences, are the creative principles of every thing in society; and these principles in regular succession form their own laws, from which there is no appeal, and which can never be either violated or reformed with impunity. Left to their own spontaneous operations, and to the regulations which these operations suggest, they proportion the population to the produce: the wants, passions, desires, and intelligence, to the general circumstances of the political body; and this proportion is the law of political equity; the first law of society.

But the violations of this equity, by the excesses of necessary passion, and by the undue restraints of power on those excesses, retard the progress of political causes and effects, and oblige societies, as they oblige individuals, to

proceed

proceed to manhood through the miseries as well as the infirmities of infancy, and the vices as well as the errors of youth.

ARCHITECTS OF CONSTITUTIONS, instead of observing these laws of real nature, seem to regard those of romance only; affect to imitate Jupiter in the production of Minerva, and to exhibit constitutions formed at once, and possessing all the properties and powers of mature and perfect institutions.

All the social establishments of mankind, in imitation of the great productions of nature, are generated by successive expansions of powers.

Those powers by repeated experiments are formed into SOCIAL HABITS, which become NEW POWERS, and either combine with or obstruct the progressive improvement and moral character of the institution. On the happy coincidence of the natural powers and acquired habits, the character of this progressive existence of societies greatly depends: for, if the passions or principles do not form habits, all actions must continue to be detached and faint experiments; and if habits supersede the general passions or principles of the state, its capacity

pacity will be protruded and attracted into special and partial dispositions, and never acquire the general balanced and composite motions, constituting those dispositions and actions, which are the virtues and the happiness of all bodies actuated by intelligence, whether animal or political.

If the mechanism of social functions were understood, we should not be under the necessity of perpetually recurring, as we now do, to the analogies between social and animal beings. But while treating of ideas which have no names, we have no method of distinguishing, but by comparing them with sensible objects which have names.

Beings of the same kind are drawn to each other by a law of attraction, similar to that of cohesion in chemical particles; and political bodies are formed by the attraction of composition, or by some circumstances, for which we have yet no names, similar to those affinities which take place between substances of different characters.

There are political, like natural bodies, with constitutions unascertained—such constitutions

are

are easily decomposed or destroyed; but in all probability not without decomposing the general chain of moral beings.

Nations, as individuals, may be defective, or they may be excessive in what may be called the irritability of the political body, and the passions immediately engendered by it.—What is the remedy? Are we to reason with that irritability, or with those passions? Or must we have recourse to the modern practice of dissolving the society?

States, like persons, acquire habits in the progress of their existence; and those habits may obstruct and derange their efforts to improve, or to acquire an intellectual and moral character. Those partial and subordinate powers, whether popular or unpopular, whether in princes or demagogues, are never beneficially repressed by violence; but by a patient, judicious, and enlightened energy.

The political, in the same manner with the animal organs, are influenced by associated ideas. States are susceptible of associated trains of motions, as the ideas of man are formed into tribes. Hence arises L'Esprit de Corps,—the spirit of nations,—the spirit of party, &c.

The

The constituted portions of the people, like the muscles and organs of man, act together, or act in succession, from the impulse of the directing powers; and by the repetition of such actions, they are indissolubly united, or associated in trains and tribes which afterwards act together. This facilitates all the operations of general action; but requires the most deliberate and profound consideration when any of its deviations and derangements are to be removed. What havoc, among such admirable processes, must be made by the destructive hatchet of a modern reformer!

The properties of societies, some of which may be partially, some fully, and all differently animated, should be correctly arranged and understood in the mind of the reformer, as well as the statesman. If a Marat, or a Thomas Paine, who were always ready to dissolve societies for reconstruction, had been asked,—What are those various qualities or principles on which the various phenomena of political bodies depend; and which constitute their several degrees of animation, life, and capacity of action?

They would have said at random they were passions, that passions are the principles of

 crimes;

crimes; and therefore the bodies comprising them should be dissolved, taken out of the direction of nature, and delivered over to them, for what they called reconstruction.

In political bodies, from the causes already mentioned, there are portions acting, and portions acted upon. The great object of attention, no doubt, is the MOVING PRINCIPLE; but reformers, even those denominated philosophical, declare war on it; and in such efforts of correction or improvement, the analogies are not taken from any ascertained processes of nature, or from any accurate theories of any animated beings.

A real philosopher would not interrupt the operations in the constitutions of states, until he had made experiments on a scale so extensive that the formula might answer any questions, and include any possible cases; leaving nothing to speculative and vain hypotheses.

The French reformers, whose misfortunes throw a veil over their errors, were all wiser in their opinions than in their experience; the most virtuous and the best intentioned of them, were men who never had access to the various situations

situations of human societies, and could not estimate the necessary effects of all the modifications of human powers under the direction of social passions or social habits.

They therefore confounded general feeling, passions, habits, and principles, in one common dissolution, and vainly hoped that a better sensibility, better habits, better passions, and better principles would instantly arise, by the enchantment of philosophical phrases, or by some miracle performed by reason.

This proved a vain hope: and it is of the utmost importance to understand, that it has been owing, not to the external obstructions which now bear the blame, but to LAWS OF NATURE, which will ever produce similar effects in similar circumstances.

EGERIA.

FIFTH STUDY.

PUBLIC IMAGINATION AND PUBLIC MIND.

We are gradually approaching the secret laboratory of modern philosophy, where the most extravagant visions of the ancients are moulded into new systems; where experience is abandoned for hypothesis; and where wisdom and sophistry, virtue and hypocrisy, mingle their sober and romantic, and their honest and insidious pretensions.

We have observed, that all bodies, political as well as natural, have a general feeling. Every impression or stimulus is communicated in them by some medium. Anatomists affirm, that medium in the more perfect animals is the irritable

fibre which acts on the next fibre, as men on men, in proper arrangements, and induces the perception of impression on the senses, or what is called sensibility. These instruments of general sensation are of the first necessity in the formation of all animated bodies, and we know, though some possess nothing more than the feeling resulting from them, that none can exist without them. They may exist without brain, without mind, and even without volition; but not without some instruments of general feeling.

Insects have sensation, though they have only noes of nerves instead of brains; and in this they resemble fœderal governments, whose bodies have the principle of life so divided, as to be incapable of collecting an united sensibility into a common judgment or action. Even worms have a perceptible sensation, though their nerves have not been discovered.

The growth and consolidation of political bodies, like gradations of animal life, stop at certain points; and their forms are variously changed by circumstances, either into tyrannies of princes, into aristocracies of chiefs, or into mixed bodies.

In these changes men feel the necessity of new ideas; and it is this necessity that impels the progress of knowledge, whether real or pretended.

Here, as in all the fluctuating conditions of political bodies, imagination is the brilliant and successful substitute of sober and simple reason. It rapidly satisfies, or seems to satisfy, the feeling of want, and agitates it with lively, though sometimes destructive pleasure.

The imagination is to the mind, either political or natural, as fermented liquors are to the body; it rouzes and vigorously employs the faculties; but, previous to the birth of reason, when used unsparingly and without judgment, it blunts the rising faculties, and prolongs the debility and ignorance of those constitutions it seems to stimulate into light, knowledge, and enjoyment.

Here the utility of a regulating mind, in political as in natural bodies, suggests itself to the real as well as to the pretended philosopher; but the one favours the attainment by observing the progress of society under the direction of natural and social laws; the other, by forcing

premature and summary provisions, checks and destroys that progress, or forces it into some vicious direction.

On such important subjects it would seem probable, that no man pretending to philosophy could overlook the great and numerous difficulties in calculating the phenomena accompanying the resistance of active beings, compared with those attending the impressions and resistances of bodies unanimated; especially as their analogies are extremely slight. But whether impulse or resistance to change, be by bodies organized or unorganized; whether by water, air, ether, or by passions, principles, minds, and souls, their laws should be first discovered, that their mutual actions may be estimated, and that all changing forces may accurately exhibit their indications, characters, and measures, in all changes of action.

No—Sophists, like poets, enter at once the region of ideal nature; and, like them, in paroxysms of frenzy *, produce models of imaginary states.

This is the general practice of the votaries of fancy.

* Democritus says, no man can be a poet without madness.

fancy. Phrysné, the mistress of Praxitelles, furnished his model of the Goddess of Love. The ancient artists exposed their mistresses to public adoration in the names of different divinities; and the bust of Alcibiades was, for some time, the Mercury of the Athenians *.

To such persons the human species may appear to more advantage in our workshops than in our families. Models preserving the finest symmetries and features of every species of beauty, are pleasing objects; and they should possess those beauties, to be occasionally reproduced by the imagination of the artist who studies them. In the mind of the poet, or poetic philosopher †, such studies produce divinities: but philosophic or poetic divinities are not practicable beings; they are not even dramatic; for the drama never admits of elevated characters without obvious infirmities.

In all the provinces of science, and even of the arts, general ideas are formed, but can never be reduced to practice.

It is a LAW OF NATURE, the reasons of which

 we

* Clem. Alx.—Ad. Gent. p. 47.

† Vide Plato in Tim. t. 3, p. 29 and 93.

we may never comprehend, that ideal perfection and ideal beauty, though objects of perpetual ambition, are unattainable. Nature herself, in all her productions, seems to fall short of her own intentions; as the forms she commonly produces are at a distance from those great and general ideas of good and beautiful, by which she appears to be actuated. Abstract nature, and individual nature, in all their productions, and in all their imitations, are as remote from each other, as the abstract ideas of moral truth, or of political wisdom, are from the actual morals of men, or from the actual condition of human societies.

In the production of blossoms and fruits, which is an annual operation of nature, she seems to evade rather than overcome destructive principles, by a profusion and an apparent waste of life. Even in her high and important production, that of man, the greater proportion perishes immaturely.

If this be the case in nature, is it wonderful the contrivances of man, to form a principle of political life, which shall surmount the numerous obstructions to its progress, should in their

their greater proportions also be abortive? why do not the votaries of ideal perfection, who ridicule all actual and practical objects, blaspheme nature, or nature's God, on the same account?

In a natural and moral system, which admits of deviations and derangements, and to which those deviations and derangements seem essential, though under the government of a being infinitely powerful, it would be folly to pretend to a political system, which would admit of no counter actions, no hostile energies obstructing its purposes; and that system contrived by beings defective both in wisdom and goodness.

The idea of perfection is, however, present in every effort of real genius, and every such effort rightly directed is an approximation; indeed, the best standards of perfection in nature are only approximations. This idea of perfection has ever induced philosophers to imagine, that reason may in all things become practice; and those who have seen no further than the point of their pen have expected it when they have written their determinations. On this

subject, their errors have been extremely important: For the reason or intellect of an individual should not, even on their principles, govern society: It is often governed by a principle that has little analogy to that faculty. This principle is an intellect more or less perfect, generated by the constitution itself, which may exhibit apparent contradictions; wise and good men being members of a vicious state, and unprincipled individuals members of a wise community.

All the phenomena of political constitutions, when not controlled, are produced by their passions, their minds, or what may be called their spirit of animation, compounded of two ingredients differently proportionate, private and public interest. But historic, like physical facts, relating to subjects of such difficulty and importance, induce speculation rather than induction. Physic examines substances producing considerable changes on the living system: and the facts of natural history and natural philosophy furnish data for analogies. It is by seizing analogies of a similar nature, that discoveries or improvements are made in politics. The political, as well as the natural philosopher, should

should not mistake an hypothesis for a theory. The wings of all hypothetical phantoms are cemented with wax. Theory is a system founded on facts. Hypotheses, principally, are wholly founded on conjectures. An hypothesis however may arrange experiments, lead to facts, and prepare for theories. An hypothesis, even when refuted, may add to our treasure of facts.

Astronomy was the science of reveries, as politics may at this time be considered, before Kepler discovered the laws of planetary motions, Gallilio the uniform acceleration of gravity, Pascal the pressure of the atmosphere, and Newton the laws of attraction. Truths of similar importance must be ascertained in politics, before its theories can afford deductions which will prove, in all cases, fair representations of the intellectual phenomena of nature as exhibited in society.

As in geometry, we suppose a point, a straight line or a circle, so in morals, and in politics, we are now obliged to assume fixed principles which we cannot perfectly and accurately reduce to practice. The great skill of a real statesman is in combining those principles to the greatest public

public advantage, with national and domestic circumstances.

We call a nation a body or a being, and attribute to it the properties of a being both corporeal and intellectual; because political, like animal systems, are induced to act—first, by external impressions,—secondly, by desire and aversion—thirdly, by public will or public reason—and fourthly, by association or sympathy.

Similar laws take place in the formation of organized bodies, whether natural or political, and in the phenomena they display. The formation of a natural body depends on the relation of its materials to each other; that of the political depends not on the fancies of projectors and fabricators of constitutions, but on the reciprocal relations of men, which are to each other in society, as the particles of matter are in the living body. A political constitution, acting wholly from its sensibility, its judgment, or its mind, and of which every member of the community forms an active but relative particle, is yet but an hypothesis.

Attempts in France to reduce it to a system proved abortive. The French reformers orga-

nized primary assemblies, municipalities, &c. and were confident they should illustrate their principles by demonstrations; but they had neither abilities, knowledge, or proper materials, to render their theory practicable. They learnt the contrivance and use of particular powers, but they understood not all the lateral connections, and all their relative situations, and were confounded and lost when it became necessary to check the simple but violent motions of parts that were near, with the compound influences of parts that were distant.

It is possible, however, though reformers must long wait for the event, that men may acquire an influence over political and moral bodies, similar to that they exercise over those which are natural.

Society is an aggregation of families, having fundamental laws forming its constitution, and civil laws securing its tranquillity. But what is that principle of which reformers have so much vaunted, and in the apparent direction of which they have committed so much evil? What is it which seems diffused through the organization of an animal to give it life and sense?—The answer would assist in giving life and sense to political bodies.

Architects

Architects of constitutions act as if political unity consisted in juxta-position or accretion ; it is not so in animal nature, it cannot be so in society. There is a principle, the continuity and equable distribution of which renders any number of people in the pursuit of their respective interest a political unit. What is the law in nature or in science which regulates the distribution of this principle? No man should presume to form or change the constitution of a State who cannot answer this question.

It seems to be generally agreed, that the arrangements of the whole political body, when formed by social wants, social feelings, habits and intelligence, may constitute one organ analagous to the general system of the natural body; and that the natural movements, positions and feelings of this organ may, by means of a council or sensorium, be rendered the materials of public reason and public will. But all bodies are influenced by counteracting principles, and to render politics a science, it should be employed in specifying and estimating those powers.

Statesmen have hitherto considered communi-

ties

ties as passive inert masses ; it is the business of philosophy not to demolish those communities, not always to criminate those statesmen, but to demonstrate that societies, justly instituted, are analagous to living bodies, having always a considerable portion of irritability, sometimes principles of reason and will diffused through their organs.

In taking living bodies as models, the Author does not mean to embarrass himself with theological questions ; it is not of importance in his present inquiries, whether the human body have or have not a distinct and immaterial soul: he considers only the actual powers possessed by organized matter ; that species of life or mind, and those functions diffused equally to all the orders of the animal kingdom, even where the presence of a distinct substance has never been pretended. Indeed, all the analogies he wants might be deduced by any skilful botanist from the vegetable kingdom, where the existence of an immaterial spirit hath never been maintained.

The similarity of physical and political bodies rests on the following facts—1st, That the phenomena of life are produced in them by the ope-

ration of agents on their organization, whether perfect or imperfect—2d, When those agents are accommodated by their quality and mode of operation to their peculiar structure, they are natural to them, whatever they may be in the views or imaginations of philosophers—3d, When they are not thus accommodated, either by excess or defect, they are unnatural, and stand not in need of empirics to destroy them. Good and evil to communities of this sort are only different states of those powers, as health and sickness are of those which affect the natural body.

Affections, arising from the condition of particular parts, from noxious circumstances debilitating or inflaming them, are subjects of municipal correction, to prevent any commotion in the general system, which may produce a constitutional disease, and require those constitutional remedies which can be administered only by the wisest men, as all their effects are rapidly diffused through the whole frame of the political body.

Political as well as physical bodies are excellent only as we can ascribe life or the power of action to them, not as they may be the instruments

ments of other bodies. Political as well as animal constitutions are free exactly in proportion to their sensibility and intellect. Those who, by the number and quality of their organs, are capable of transmitting all possible information to a central council or sensorium, in perfect sympathy with them, are capable of developing the highest political intellect, a public mind, and a will directing public functionaries and public actions. And the gradations in communities of this intellect, from absolute political freedom to absolute political slavery, are exactly proportioned to the gradations in the quantity and quality of the organs of general information, and of the capacity communicated to the sensorium of developing a public mind.

The community is a congeries of smaller bodies corporate or domestic, which have each their particular affections, and are united by the general affection called sympathy : if one become torpid, the whole will sympathize either by yielding to the torpor, or rouzing into action to avoid it. They obey similar laws with the associated organs of man. The health and relative strength of all bodies depend on the proportioned quantities

tities of their social and voluntary powers. The will must balance the sensibility of the whole body, and the sensibility must balance the will.

It is said a great nation cannot deliberate and act, and hence the necessity of representation.

If it be meant that all individuals cannot always be present in the deliberations and actions of the community, this is true of all nations, great or little. But if it be meant that portions of the political body cannot deliberate or act for the other portions possessing their general consent and sympathy, it is a sophism incompatible with the analogy on which alone the political body is formed. Portions of this body may be called the council, the immediate or principal seat of the will; other portions may be the principal seats of active or executive powers; but neither of those powers are representations of the body; they are appropriated parts of that constitution, which have determined that mode of regulating its own actions by laws which shall be explained hereafter.

In the succeeding Essays or Studies, these principles will be applied to actual constitutions, ancient and modern.

EGERIA.

SIXTH STUDY.

PHILOSOPHICAL INSPIRATION.

On a Sunday morning after the publication of my last Number, meditation and literary labour having rendered my night restless, I fell into a slight sleep; and, without being conscious of any previous circumstances, associating real incidents with reveries, or having perused Virgil in the last twenty years, my imagination represented me in the character of Æneas, at the gate of Avernus,—a sibyl guiding my steps. Roused by the awful perplexities of my situation, I perceived a female standing near me, whose symmetry and beauty were exquisite expressions of such intelligence and goodness as I had never before seen.

Awake, (she said, in a penetrating though gentle tone,)—*let thy soul awake to the voice of humanity.* I will explain to thee the best use of these STUDIES.—Start not at my proposal; —I mean not to render thee an abstruse dogmatist, or a mystic prophet;—distant futurity dwells, even to me, in impenetrable shadows. But the earth has been drenched with blood,—Europe is whitened with human bones; and the spirits of the murdered friends of mankind demand their apology and their fame. Thou hast seen them sink in the abyss of perfidy and carnage,—produced by a combination of every thing politically detestable in Europe.

EDITOR.

I have seen guilt and shame the companions of all crimes;—but who art thou, gentle and benignant being, who thus rousest sorrows, mellowing into serenity? and what dost thou require of me?

EGERIA.

I am that spirit, whom thou hast not mistaken in calling gentle and benignant, whose

 peculiar

peculiar province it is to check those ruthless fiends who send forth at pleasure the liveried instruments of desolation to ravage and to destroy. I am EGERIA, whose name is affixed to thy lucubrations. I meliorated the Roman character by a mixture of superstition,—the only ingredient that would then blend with it. I mingled the spirit of chivalry with the ferocity of the feodal system;—I encouraged the crusades;—I urged the sale or division of hereditary principalities;—and favoured the introduction of commerce.

When superstition elevated a PRIEST to contend with Patriarchs and Emperors,—I dug up the Pandects,—revived a taste for Letters,—and produced the art of Printing. I directed the effects of that art to the emancipation of new portions of the earth;—and I shall soon be on the wing to check the abuses of a general and violent revolution, which may operate to the disadvantage of the human race.

EDITOR.

But why not have prevented its horrors?

EGERIA.

They were not to be prevented.—But my business relates principally to those persons and principles which now fan the dying flame of discord, which would tempt, with frantic rage, all the world around them to renew the fierce orgies of the demon war, at whose howl all Europe has so long throbbed and sickened. It is my object, by diffusing real knowledge, to diffuse the healing gale of peace, and effectually to close the wounds of wretchedness.

EDITOR.

The blessings of the world will attend thee. The long silence and inaction of genius and talents are justly lamented as public crimes and public calamities. But to do good is extremely difficult;—to do evil, always easy.

EGERIA.

This is the language of *timidity*, not of prudence. It is the duty of every man to contribute to his country the fair contingent of his reason and information.

EDITOR.

I hesitate, because, on mature meditation,—on consulting the best powers of my mind,—I feel the subjects agitating mankind, in all their nature and consequences, too unwieldy for my intellectual force. I have hoped, great occasions might produce great minds, who would scatter their godlike ideas on the tempest, and sooth the world to wisdom and tranquillity.

EGERIA.

In me behold their harbinger and their herald. Be my instrument in sinking into infamy those exalted miscreants who can wield only the besom of destruction! and in assisting the best talents, and their possessors, to calm the passions and awaken the reason of mankind.

EDITOR.

I should toil only to reap toil; for the task is hopeless. Fairy fancy may touch with happy colours the distant landscape; but now the recollection of the yell of UHLANS spreading desolation, vibrates more gratefully on the hearts of pretended statesmen, than the voice of a bene-

volent philosopher studying the interests of mankind.

EGERIA.

Where is that philosopher?—When reason and prejudice took the field in France, what philosopher warned his country that *armies* were not their proper weapons?

Europe has blazed with fires, not yet extinguished, that may purify, or may consume it. Receive the instructions I now give thee:—Communicate them to the Senate of thy country; for by thy means I would thus address that Senate.

"LEGISLATORS, You have been assembled on the most important occasion that has occurred in the history of the world.

"Whether you consist of a selection of individuals that may save Europe, as well as your country, time will speedily discover.

"Patriotic and selfish principles, like the living and decaying powers of animal bodies, are now in agonizing struggles; and you are the produce of one or other of them: for political, like natural life, is a perpetual circle of renovation and decay.

"You,

"You, LEGISLATORS, are denominated REPRESENTATIVES;—whether correctly or not, I may soon have occasion to consider. You are selected by a LAW, in political societies, for which there will be no name until the processes on which it is founded be clearly understood. The brain of every animal, whether good or mischievous in its dispositions, is furnished with particles, which some men may call representatives, by a law similar to that which produces the council of every nation. Every choice must be under the absolute direction of that *public spirit*, or of that *depraved selfishness*, which actuates those parts of the community in which the right of actual election is vested.

"On subjects immediately affecting the general happiness, awful events have lately warned you to be guided by experience and history, more than by the reasonings of speculative writers; who generally commence their works by hypotheses ON MAN BY NATURE; and those hypotheses are insinuated as principles of political science.

"Thus PLATO and ARISTOTLE in ancient, and HOBBS, MONTESQUIEU, FENELON, and ROUS-

SEAU, in modern times, have had their sectaries. Of these, the most dangerous are the Platonists; as, by an air of mysticism in their manner and style, they acquire a superiority which imposes on the multitude; and, by spiritualizing, they soothe the vanity of weak minds, without touching the *real principle* that actuates and improves political institutions.

"ROUSSEAU, the modern PLATO, colours all his doctrines, paradoxes and precepts, with this general principle—" Every thing is good in nature, the work of God: Every thing is evil in society, the work of man." This is mystic jargon, which may be rendered captivating in expression, though pernicious in effect. When can any thing be out of nature, or out of the jurisdiction and power of its Creator? LEGISLATORS, every man is as much within the influence of Nature and the power of his Creator, when suspended to a gallows for his crimes, as when first entering the world, or produced by a midwife.

"Experience and history will inform you, that the first* combinations of men are those of savages, whose ferocity is occasionally suspended only

* Vide Second Study, page 18, &c.

only by necessity and force. Nature never operates so advantageously to humanity as in the complex processes of civilized societies; and man approaches his God only by the gradations of civilization.

" The earth, by human labour, multiplies subsistence—Love impels man to increase and multiply. Population produces wants which all the efforts of labour and invention have not hitherto been able to satisfy. Hence * the origin of inequality, and the inlet of all evil. Multitudes cannot be produced without proportional wants. In a state of political freedom, those wants would generate proportional intelligence, which requires only the assistance of impartial justice to convert them into blessings. But errors †, unavoidable in early national institutions, perpetuate the *hostile spirit* of savage tribes; and produce WAR, the *parent* and the *offspring* of despots—which produces a vicious population—which checks the sources of the most useful industry—and which fetters intelligence, the author of all human happiness.

"This

* Vide Third Study, page 86.

† Vide Fourth Study, page 60.

"This evil, interwoven with the origin of all societies, and which has lately menaced their dissolution, is, LEGISLATORS, the first and most important object of your attention.

"I mean not to discuss general principles, so as to be detained by sophistical exceptions to them.

"ALL WARS ARE LOATHSOME TO HUMANITY. Even those pretended to be defensive, have generally circumstances in them which stain the characters of their abettors with indelible opprobrium.

"In WAR, the conqueror and the conquered lose their liberties; for it is essential to political liberty, that the people should have the disposal of their own property and their own blood; and it is essential to a warlike government, that the military should be disproportionate to the civil power, and dispose of the lives of its subjects.

"WAR, however its events may be blazoned, however fools may be amused by its pageantry, is a perversion of science; it is cruelty methodised; and it requires an early education to study it without horror *.

"Where soldiers are annexed to a particular power,

* The Chinese hold the state of a soldier dishonourable.

power, they may be traced to a disease in the constitution, which they often render mortal. Peasants and mechanics inlist to flee the miseries of domestic want. In States daily exhibiting odious contrasts, in the secure maintenance of the soldier, and the precarious subsistence of the labourer ; the one, though taken from the refuse of the world, or rescued from the gallows, receiving bread, as the Israelites did from Heaven ; the other, after painful labour and perpetual anguish, obtaining a scanty and insufficient meal, and dreading the view of his wife and children like starving shadows around him ; —in such States, is it wonderful man should be hardened by despair, abandon his home, and, unterrified by the fate of his fellows, plunge into vice and peril more tolerable than lingering and hopeless suffering ?

" Thus arises a distinct profession from that of *Defenders of their Families and their Country ;* that of men who *deal in human blood.* The most ferocious brute tears his prey from hunger ;— man *feeds* not on man. How wretched must be his condition when he can be led into the field of slaughter by aspiring and destructive ambition,

tion, to maintain slothful gluttony or polluted hypocrisy! or when he may be induced to employ his arms against his oppressed fellow-citizens!

"It is true, LEGISLATORS, many of you know little more of WAR than its dreadful fame. The abodes of industry and innocence around *you* have not been desolated; *your* slumbers and enjoyments have not been destroyed by the shrieks of helpless infancy, or the desponding moans of insulted and expiring age.

"But what dreary landscapes have you contemplated in every other part of Europe! The natural influence of the seasons nearly lost! The tremendous yells of murdering hosts chasing away the peaceful cultivator, who feared to turn his native soil, slightly covering the bones of his friends!

"Thus physical evils * are melancholy associates

* The 14th century was nearly occupied by European wars; agriculture neglected; food scanty and unwholesome; and the plague epidemic fourteen times.

From 1006 to 1680, the plague succeeded, wars harassing and desolating the miserable remains of a starving population fifty-two times. And such was the general condition of the

tes of the moral and political miseries necessarily produced by WAR; the occasions of which are frequently justified only by the reasoning of maniacs; and the details of which, in future, and improved periods, when men shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, will be deemed the chronicles of folly.

" I will not, LEGISLATORS, lead you to the discussion of the various PRETENCES and APOLOGIES of WAR. All of them have been adduced by one party or the other, to justify the desolation and subjugation of a great part of Europe. If there be any motive or pretence peculiar to the advocates for *war* at this period, it is *timidity* and *terror*, the parents of dastardly cruelties and cowardly vices. This is not the caution of enlightened prudence;—it is not a perception of danger producing fortitude;—it is an undefined and undetermined ALARM, of which

people, that Louis VIII. of France bequeathed legacies to two thousand hospitals for lepers.

In the winter 1694, apoplexies prevailed in an uncommon manner, owing to the universal grief and anxieties of the war.

which candidates for places are the screech-owls.

"It is peculiarly important for you, LEGISLATORS, at this time, maturely to consider whether all declamation should not be carefully discredited which has a tendency to dispirit the country. The British Lion howling in *terror*, would be a melancholy novelty to those who remember his *generous rage!*

"Above all things, LEGISLATORS, preserve from this despicable contagion, as well as from oppression, want, and misery, the brave yeomanry and hardy peasantry of the country; who constitute, when justly treated, the real riches, the firm support, and the certain security of the United Islands.

"When danger comes, where will you find the clamorous abettors of a wasteful, bloody, but *distant* WAR? They will skulk into their dens, or seek their safety in emigration. Alarmists and their spies, mercantile monopolists and their starving artificers, placemen, pensioners, stock-jobbers and swindlers! What an army! It would feel like a flock of sheep at the howl of the wolf.

"I will

"I will not reason with you, LEGISLATORS, on the arguments for WAR which have always been adduced by those who had an interest even in its evils. A WAR *on opinions* generally establishes them.

"In Greece, the destruction of the *Pythagorean School*, and the death of SOCRATES, were cruel but momentary triumphs of superstition over a philosophy which has furnished lessons and principles to all future ages.

"A WAR on opinions must ever be undertaken on the inhuman determination to extinguish them, by overspreading the country with the bones of all who desseminate or profess them.

"On the trial of CHARLEMAGNE, at the TRIBUNAL of the dead, I averted my eyes from the monster with horror, or shed tears at the recital of those scenes where he had marched his armies against peaceable nations to *modify* their opinions *.

"It appeared he had destroyed twenty millions of his fellow-creatures by famine, fire, and the sword.

* Instances of solemn trials of this nature will be given in the course of the work.

sword. It was pleaded in vain that he had founded bishopricks and abbeys; and that, while his fate was depending before the tribunal, the Pope was occupied in his canonization: The monstrous combination, in his detestable character, of debauchery and fanaticism, of ferocity and hypocrisy, accelerated his dreadful sentence; and, whether under the discipline of the furies, or in occasional and painful transmigrations, his sufferings, and the prospect of his doom at the general judgment, are dreadful lessons to royal and religious plunderers, depredators, murderers, and barbarians.

"CHARLES *the Fifth*, who deluged Germany with the blood of the Lutherans, *established their opinions*. The same executioners who were employed for ages in mangling heretics, now exercise their skill on him.

"Of all tyrannies, that of opinions is the most cruel, and the most ineffectual.

"TARTARUS itself seems at a loss for adequate punishments on the horrible TIMUR *, one of the most distinguished zealots for opinions. The furies practise on him the perpetual repetition

* Commonly called Tamerlane.

tion of those enormities to which he condemned the unoffending citizens of SIVAS*. Those who escaped his first fury were bound in such a manner as to press the nose to the fundament; in that condition they were thrown into ditches, covered with boards, and made to perish by slow fires! In the ditches of Tartarus, he has not the privilege of expiring.

"SPAIN employed her forces and her treasures, for a century, in *a war on opinions*, in the Low Countries. Her arbitrary claims and cruelties induced a determined resistance, and fixed *the religion and government they were intended to destroy.*

"The fate of Philip would only excite your contemptuous disgust.

"WARS OF PRETENDED SECURITY, which are often WARS of AMBITION, are not more justifiable in their motives, or more happy in their effects. ROME and CARTHAGE were occupied many centuries by mutual projects of extirpation, FOR MUTUAL SECURITY.

"The Romans were the opprobrium and the curse of human nature.

 "I in-

* A city in Asia.

" I induced NUMA to shut up the temple of JANUS; but my counsel was soon disregarded, and it continued open to the end of the first Punic war*, the Romans having uninterruptedly sustained and committed hostilities nearly five hundred years.

"When their dictators, consuls, &c. were precipitated into TARTARUS, they strove to mitigate the processes of correction, by alleging their diffusion of knowledge. They, in fact, impeded the natural and gradual progress of the human mind. *A people without commerce, without industry, and without economy, are not the instruments of prosperity and happiness.*

" The warlike and predatory spirit of Rome checked, and often extinguished all real science and philosophy; and substituted erudition or learning; rhetoric, and elegant versification; the drama, and the fine arts: which are all compatible with the greatest depravity of mind and morals, and with the basest and most absolute slavery.

" LEGISLATORS,—I leave to your reflection and judgment, whether the war which has ravaged Europe,

* A. U. C. 510.

Europe, whatever were its origin, has been more beneficial in its general effects, than the ancient struggles for conquest and dominion? and whether you have any justifiable motives for defining its renewal?"

At these words the goddess waved her wand, and I sunk into the nether world, the reservoir of intellectual reflection, where departed spirits recollect their designs and actions, and prepare for a final judgment on them.

EGERIA.

SEVENTH STUDY.

Neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

St. Luke.

ROME AND CARTHAGE, WARNINGS TO FRANCE AND BRITAIN.

When we had passed the boundaries of the upper and nether worlds, a scene magnificent, and apparently unbounded, opened to our view.

But we were particularly attracted by the groups of two immense and distinct hosts; the one consisting of the votaries of force, who had not, by what mortals would call ages of reflec-

 tion,

tion, wholly relinquished their first prejudices: the other, consisting of the votaries of reason, who were reconsidering their infirmities and errors, and either preparing themselves for the general judgment, or for those temporary sentences which might afford them opportunities of improving their talents.

Among the former, my guide pointed out several Assyrian and Persian conquerors; Philip, Alexander, Romulus, Scipio, Hannibal, and Cæsar:—Among the latter, Moses, Minos, Zoroaster, Confucius, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, &c.

On our appearance, CÆSAR exclaimed, Behold the goddess of philosophical dreams, leading one more of her votaries for instruction!

What! after all your menaces, and all your eloquent orations, you are frightened at the nod of a little creature, who has adopted our principles, and pursues our measures.

EGERIA.

That little creature, as you call him, has had the fortune of all ambitious military chiefs, at the

the close of a revolution, who have absorbed the powers of their associates, and on the ruins of anarchy displayed the banners of despotism. Those characters, called great men, are produced by situations and points of view creating disproportion. The general difference of man and man is little more than difference of circumstances.

My companion will not be persuaded, without inquiry here, that the state of man is at this time peculiarly unfortunate: for it is the general assertion of erudition, that the most enlightened among ancient nations were republics, and enjoyed civil and political liberty.

[The separate ranks approach each other, and various conversations take place.]

SOLON.

I am sometimes at a loss to determine, whether the moderns are much advanced in moral and political knowledge. In all periods the fine arts, which soften manners, are favoured by despots, who repress that philosophy which developes the thoughts of men. We, who enjoyed

a species of liberty, proceeded in our inquiries only from subtle maxims to subtle conclusions.

Literary periods, after the revival of learning, consisted of, first, erudition and translations; then imitative and original efforts of imagination, blended with erudition;—and then the period of reflection, reasoning, legislation, and political philosophy.

The former two are compatible with tyranny or slavery; the latter is incompatible. Chemistry, which does not reason, may subsist in either; but the mathematics are generally allied to freedom.

EGERIA.

The phrase *antient republic*, is, with modern scholars, and even modern reformers, synonimous with the word *liberty*.

SOLON.

I know not what they may mean by liberty; but if liberty be the general effect of a constitution allowing equivalents to all talents, and permitting equally to all persons the useful employment

ployment of them, nothing could have been more distant from it than the effect of the constitution of ATHENS, of which I may be supposed to have some knowledge.

The first governments of Greece were generally monarchies; probably because the states of Greece were colonies from the east.

I was elevated to the dignity of first magistrate of Athens for the purpose of reforming the constitution. Aristotle has justly represented my great object to be, to invest with supreme power the general assembly of the people, where all the citizens had a right to assist; to give it the power of peace and war, impositions, laws, alliances, and all the great interests of the state.

But all these objects were previously proposed and discussed in the senate of four hundred, drawn from the four tribes. The assemblies of the people were ordinarily held in ten days, or once in every decade; but attendance was generally neglected until the people were allowed each three oboli, about fourpence halfpenny. Some regulations or laws required six thousand votes. Every man might speak; but business

soon gave occasion to the appointment of ten national orators.

EGERIA.

Who cultivated the soil? and who exercised the arts of necessary industry?

SOLON.

The slaves.

EGERIA.

Could there have been any idea of a republic, or of a free constitution, where the majority of the people was in slavery?

SOLON.

Ask Lycurgus, a greater favourite than I am among modern reformers.

LYCURGUS.

My information will not be much more favourable to the late projects for equality and liberty.

The free Spartans having been banditti, were reform-

reformed into soldiers, and their country was a camp. Two generals were called kings, with arbitrary powers, out of the province of the general assemblies. To temper that power, which was generally in action, ARISTOTLE and PLATO have truly represented, that I formed a council after the example of CRETE, consisting of twenty-eight persons of advanced age and experience.

The senate, presided by the kings, discussed and decreed all important subjects before they were submitted to the assembly of the people; which approved without discussion or alteration.

The constitution of LACONIA was that of a confederation of towns; in which SPARTA preponderated, to unite their powers in war, and to preserve their customs in peace. The general or national assembly was held at SPARTA.

EGERIA.

You produced, in those you called the people, an ardor and enthusiasm of public spirit, which have very seldom been imitated.

LYCURGUS.

Educated by and for what was denominated the public, and having no gratification but from that public, patriotism became an ardent and imperious passion; it combined all the interests and all the emotions of the heart: the state had but one sentiment, one idea, one will, and one spirit. That spirit, however, was confined to free men; the greater portion of the inhabitants of the country consisted of slaves, but slaves of a peculiar kind.

The cities who submitted to SPARTA with the loss of portions of their rights, preserved an apparent liberty. The city of HELOS resisted, and being subdued, the inhabitants were made slaves, distributed through Laconia. They were not however the most depressed slaves; they were rather like the Metayers of France, and the new Lacedemonian families sprung from them. Callicratidas, Gylippus, and Lysander were born in that class.

EGERIA.

And the division of lands?

LYCUR-

LYCURGUS.

Was incompatible with every idea lately entertained of civil and political liberty in the whole community. It was not dissimilar to the knights fees of feodal institutions. ARISTOTLE and PLUTARCH justly observe, that every portion of land was assigned to the chief of a family, who could neither purchase, nor sell, nor divide, nor bequeath, but was obliged to leave it to the eldest of his children.

EGERIA.

We seek, in vain, from the principal sages of Greece, the models or even the outlines of a *free* political constitution. No ancient writer, of authority or credit, furnishes even an intimation, that the Greek philosophers and statesmen had conceived an idea of a constitution comprehending the whole population of the state, and allowing reciprocal rights to all the members of all its classes.

This is an idea peculiar to modern times, the most improvable, and the most important, which

which has ever been formed; and probably originating in that noble effect of christian fraternity, the abolition of slavery.

The incorporation of labourers and artisans with the other classes of the community, formed a *new æra* in political history:—and those superficial politicians, another name for modern reformers, who refer to Greek models and Greek characters, when pleading the cause of liberty, seem not to have perused even the meagre histories, which are parts of the amusements even of circulating libraries.

FREDERIC [*of Prussia.*]

But ROME is the great model of good and evil to modern statesmen, and TACITUS their oracle.

TACITUS.

There is more sarcasm than truth in the wisest observations of the great Frederic.

The constitution of ROME was that of a monarchy; which degenerating into tyranny, was overturned. It became an aristocracy, by creating

ating its deliverers generals, and by the wars which continued those generals in power.

The contentions of the senate and the populace of Rome, produced two opposite powers, whose will prevailed in irregular alternations: the republic, as it was denominated, being sometimes governed by decrees of the senate alone, and sometimes by laws pronounced merely by the populace.

The circumstance which opened the way for the universal dominion of *Rome*, and for the usurpation of the most execrable of all titles, that of Mistress of the World, was the art or address, or policy of Scipio Africanus; who, availing himself of his military glory, and the condition of the republic, induced the people to violate in his favour the principles of all social constitutions, by teaching them to devolve all power into the hands of a general; and that general being at the head of an army, prepared his country for those sanguinary successions of princes and emperors, which rendered the Roman name the terror of the human race.

SCIPIO.

It was HANNIBAL who conferred those powers, which were become necessary to save my own by ruining his country.

HANNIBAL, not CATO, was the real author of the maxim, "Delenda est Carthago."

HANNIBAL.

What! Was HANNIBAL the author of the principle of depredation and encroachment to which Rome owed her birth, her gradual acquisition of territory, and at last universal dominion.

Was I the author of the rape of the Sabines; the invasion and robberies which gave Rome possession of Italy; the march of Roman banditti into SPAIN, GAUL, and GERMANY; and of that infernal proclamation which became the bane of universal humanity, "THAT ROME WAS THE PROTECTOR—THE FRIEND OF THE OPPRESSED OF ALL NATIONS, AND READY TO ASSIST THEM IN THE RECOVERY OF THEIR LIBERTY."

Oh,

Oh, that Providence would instantly commission me to revisit the earth, that I might again fight the abettors of this abominable doctrine!

BACON.

Thy zeal may be applauded, Hannibal; but the effects of the doctrine would not be prevented by WAR, which aggravates all the evils it may be intended to remove.

SCIPIO.

It is curious to hear Hannibal, the most cruel of all celebrated generals, pleading the cause of humanity. I have traced his bloody and ruinous steps, where the unoffending peasants were reduced to feed on loathsome animals, and starving infants struggling to suck their dead mothers; their forms furnished his nightly visions: the havock he sent through Italy knew no rest; slaughter streamed her streets with blood, and famine sat enthroned on mounds of carcases in all her districts. These have been the devices of the humanity of Hannibal.

HANNIBAL.

All declamation.—My country nobly grappled with the monster Rome, asserting universal dominion; and though her sons have erred, injured me, and ruined her, she will have the eternal praise of having unfurled, to the view of an astonished and indignant world, the hallowed banners of independence and liberty.

BACON.

Against thee, Hannibal, when at the gates of Rome the Romans fought, to shield their aged parents, their wives and children, from the swords of martial ruffians. The war between thee and the Roman generals was a war of vengeance and extermination. If, after thy first victories, thou hadst proposed and enforced a treaty confining the Romans to Italy; if thou hadst improved the resources of thy country to check and balance the power of ROME, thou wouldst probably have prevented the most disastrous event to the interests of humanity in all the records of antiquity, THE DESTRUCTION OF CARTHAGE.

What Aristotle has transmitted to us of her institutions and customs; the progress she had made in the arts of agriculture, trade, navigation, and commerce, impresses us with high opinions of her political and civil improvements.

Her destruction was necessary to the accomplishment of the Roman object, UNIVERSAL DESPOTISM, under pretences of *universal fraternity* and *universal philanthropy*. Hannibal adopted the *common error* of mortals, to resist and retaliate military injuries with their own weapons; before the whole world was, as it ought to have been, instructed and alarmed at the nature and progress of the Roman power.

The Goddess of Political Philosophy, [turning to Egeria,] who now attends our conferences, should be aware of all the effects of this error, as the associated powers of Europe have adopted it, and are now apprehensive of its consequences. Egeria feels, I am sure, the lurid atmosphere is ominous of coming storms; all the horison of a smiling prospect frowns, and the instructed imagination sees the red arm of slaughter

slaughter signing deceitful terms of pacification, and hears the howl of horror intermingled with professions of fraternity and philanthropy.

SOLON.

Surely the world will not again suffer itself to be plunged into the gulph of darkness and misery, wherein Rome for ages ignominiously held it.

BACON.

Ask the nymph who presides in the province of political science.

EGERIA [*shaking her head.*]

I fear the world has miseries yet to endure, before my votaries are taught even the grammar of their language.

They have lately stunned the ear of Europe with the phrases *public will, public mind, organization,* and *constitution,* without an idea annexed to either of them.

The object of every partizan, and of every party, has been power; and force hath decided all questions in metaphysics and philosophy.

France

France much applauded in its first professions of reform and regeneration; terms to which it annexed no accurate or practicable ideas; and much injured in its random and extravagant efforts to execute them: France, like Rome, driven to the last extremity; like Rome, derived strength from its calamities; and, like Rome, it seems prepared to sacrifice its own liberties, and those of the world, to its ambition and revenge.

SOLON.

The cases are certainly similar, but the circumstances of the people are different, internally and externally. France abounds with men of information, who can distinguish between its interests and the gratification of its passions.

The military power which has arrested its revolution, and driven its enemies from its borders, if it retaliate on those enemies, if it conquer or subdue them directly or indirectly; will rivet those chains which are now lightly thrown over the country itself; it will plunge Europe and the world into the slavery, and consequently

sequently into the ignorance and darkness of the early centuries of the present æra, to be again recovered by the painful efforts of genius and industry.

EGERIA.

These are evils to be apprehended, and they will be avoided, or they will take place, as France and Britain may be induced to act towards each other: in the same manner as the fate of the ancient world depended on the conduct of Rome and Carthage.

The governments of those celebrated republics resolved on force, and the force of the ultimate conqueror became, as it ever must become, the law and the scourge of the human race.

This may again be the case, if the councils of France and Britain be not actuated by real wisdom. They now dwell on their respective injuries, and seek pretences of jealousy and recrimination. These are the follies of little minds, whatever be their military talents or fame.

It

It is the interest of every wise and good man, even in France, to exert his utmost efforts to preserve Britain in its present state of improvement, prosperity and liberty; as the only remaining chart or book wherein France and the world may peruse lessons of jurisprudence, civil liberty, industry, and political economy, with infinitely more effect than in the declamations of sycophant prefects, or the visions of speculative academicians.

On the other hand, France alone can properly and beneficially, even to Britain, balance that commercial preponderance which of itself would soon overturn her.

But who shall induce chiefs of armies, and military orators, to attend to such considerations?

SOLON.

We are called upon to attend to something allied to them; Minos will immediately pronounce his sentence on Edmund Burke, and we are summoned to hear it.

EGERIA.

EIGHTH STUDY.

Sermo datur cunctis, animi sapientia paucis.

QUINT.

THE JUDGMENT OF MINOS ON EDMUND BURKE.

WE had scarcely approached the awful Tribunal, when MINOS said,

"Spirits of all classes and orders—you, especially, who have reasons to suppose that you may be soon commissioned to revisit the earth—should carefully attend to the judgment, which my situation and my duty oblige me to pronounce.

"It is not my intention to anticipate any

important determinations on the principles and conduct of that great event, THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. Every incident of that subject shall be adjudged by the evidence peculiar to it: it has been a process of right and wrong, of good and evil—of which it is difficult, and it would at this moment be unfair, to give a summary opinion.

"Of the present DEFENDANT, we are called upon, perhaps prematurely, but not unjustly, to judge; because the zeal or mania, to which, by his mode of opposition, he has greatly contributed, is still in operation, blasting the fairest blossoms of Peace. This zeal is deaf to every virtuous prayer: it is frenzied at the names of those who would pour the balm of mutual pity into minds irritated by mutual error and mutual injury: it delights only in the clamours of slaughter and the groans of death—of ravaged cities, of captives massacred, and of age and infancy slaughtered, sometimes even in cold blood.

"The principal instrument of these turbulent spirits, is a tumid and verbose oratory, which has pervaded and influenced all classes and professions in modern Europe; and of which the

the Defendant has been an important and successful professor.

" In the assemblies, which sprung from and accelerated the French Revolution, it generally excluded all the usual expressions of common sense, exaggerated all circumstances and events, and converted errors into crimes.

" Those exaggerations were echoed from Britain; particularly by a rhetorical sect, of which the Defendant was the chief; the members of which seemed disposed to count the length of their orations by days, and not by minutes; they extended the relation of a fact into the tedious similitude of an epic poem; and they confounded all right and wrong, probability and improbability, by the confusion of digressions, by the pomp of phraseology, and by the exhausted condition and weariness of their hearers.

" Nothing has contributed more to the evils which have lately infested Europe, than this spurious oratory: for it instantly converted mutual mistakes into mutual injuries; and dishonoured a war, perhaps inevitable, in many respects justifiable, with imputations of iniquitous

and atrocious purposes. In Britain, it is nearly driven within the circle of a faction. In France, it has spread itself like a baneful weed: The language of its Government is always in the clouds; and a General cannot issue an order, or a Prefect compliment the Consul, without such multitudes of tropes and figures, as *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* would not have crowded into all the orations of their lives.

" Spirits always howling the dirge of death, Eloquence inculcating sentiments, to the effects of which, common Humanity would dread to give a name, should be chased from the earth.

" Edmund Burke! it has been proved, in thy first examination as an orator, by *Longinus* and *Quintilian*, in the presence of *Demosthenes*, *Cicero*, &c. that, like every popular candidate, thy study has been to strew thy flowers in season.

" In the American War, thou wert pledged to the weaker party in Parliament. Thy wilder thoughts were, therefore, generally, checked; and thou hast often assumed the semblance of argument.

" On

"On the REVOLUTION OF FRANCE, thou wert unrestrained; and hatred and resentment of intended injuries, or even of absurdities, converted into infuriated principles, like rays of Tartarean light, beamed from thee unrefracted on the astonished eye, and fiercely actuated all common minds.

"I repeat it, that I determine nothing, at this time, on the GREAT PRINCIPLES in question. They will come before me in their order. Though thine horror of the proferred FRATERNITY of France, was a just and true SENTIMENT; many of thy fantasies have been shewn by thy examiner to be the diseased offspring of a feverish brain, the produce of a fiery genius, which the British Ministers of the time kept at a cautious distance; perceiving that, instead of enlightening, it scorched thy real friends. Like thy antagonists at Paris, thou hadst perverted all the powers of a strong imagination, blown its fires into pernicious flames, substituted fury for enthusiasm, and exaltation for sublimity.

"That thou hast possessed eloquence, has been liberally allowed: but it was that of a genius often enamoured of errors, embracing a tawdry, intemperate hag, instead of the beauteous forms

of moderation and truth; and employing its powers and address to present evils to thy country, under the mask and in the robes of glory and happiness. In thy works, though their general purport is to induce us to look back and doat on the errors of our infancy, thou dost often rise loftily, and assume a species of glory: but the rays of that glory are harsh; it has a brazen glare, which startles and disgusts the eye of intelligent sensibility.

"The events thou hast pretended to explain, by poetical, oratorical, or superstitious reveries, men are at this time imperiously commanded to study with scrupulous attention; to examine the internal sources of evils; and to penetrate the intended or fortuitous dispositions of those moral masses, which have diffused terror through Europe, sometimes by their union, sometimes by their disunion.

"CLOUDY-MINDED FANATICISM may be disposed to frighten REASON, JUSTICE and LIBERTY,—beings unsusceptible of fear! Their votaries may be frightened, or may be murdered; but they are invulnerable. In pleading the cause of Truth, as thou hast often done, thou shouldst have dropped the weapons of slaughter;

slaughter; in the use of which, all disciplined brutes are equal. Thou wert, and thy disciples are, challenged to calm and patient discussion; and shunning must be deemed victory, even by the votaries of the most pernicious errors.

" Thou hast frequently invoked the aid of Religion—Hadst thou faith in thy own creed? or was it one of thy masks? It cannot serve thee at this time, looking forward to that awful day, when all thou hast calumniated, all thou hast injured, shall demand justice on thee at the Throne of GOD?

" Christianity itself, by orators of thy character, would be converted into a religion of hatred; into ethics of butchery and havoc. GOD grant such spirits proper occasions of reflection and repentance! The ministering angels of the Great Day will otherwise exclaim, 'Are these 'the spirits of men, of orators, of the senators of 'an enlightened nation? Give them hot blood; 'for they seem to be fiends.'

" Be happy! It is in my power to advise thee to retire to those regions of reflection, and retreats of repentance, which this place affords.

Go into solitude—go! Die to a world thou hast sickened with false hopes,—where thou hast contributed many of the ingredients of that alarming METEOR, which has been, and which is still, alluring Europe into pursuits that may leave her deeply wretched and dishonoured."

" Or, if thou choosest them, there are here other solitary haunts, preparatory to future woe. There, wearying execrations, and bloody prayers, echo to the pealing choir of expiring superstition. There, secluded and incorrigible spirits harmlessly imagine the festivals of inextinguishable rage. Choose, among those abodes; of which of them art thou a fit inmate? Go!—into solitude, go!

" But hear, as materials for thy solemn meditations, the judgment which thy examinations must have anticipated.

" Thou hast experienced the inefficacy of PASSION, even in thy parliamentary warfares. The Ministers of the day, whilst thou wert foaming with rage, and execrating their measures, gave thee examples of the maxim of *Machival*, 'The world is in the possession of the phlegmatic.' Ministers stopped thy mouth,

as

as *Hercules* did that of *Cerberus*. But see the vast disproportion of the rewards of thy splendid services and repeated salvation of thy country, (if thy modest hints were developed and credited,) with those of others: If thou hadst commanded equal temper, thou mightst have obtained equal recompense."

"I do not mean to sanction the common reproaches of places and pensions: They may be among the most honourable distinctions of great and good men. To act well, is its own recompense; to act well, for the public, the noblest. To mingle such satisfactions with the feelings of what may be justly denominated a mere pensioner of power or wealth, is, morally, self-murther."

"A pensioner, when not justified by unquestionable public services, is a bloated fly in an artificial sun-beam,—an insect, pampered by pollution,—a horse-leech, perpetually draining the peasant's blood.

"The professions of patriotism, on this subject, are therefore generally suspected.

"A man who pretends to devote himself to the public by the sacrifice of his family, by neglecting

glecting his own independent support, begins his career of public virtue by being a private villain. The public is best served—not when men of desperate fortunes associate, either in senates or in clubs, to force themselves into the direction of its affairs,—but when every man discharges or improves upon the duties of his own situation, and employs the surplus of his time on public objects. If thou hadst reared a virtuous family in a cottage, and hadst given to the public the fruits of thy leisure, the world would have been infinitely more benefited, than by thy long services to a faction, by thy furious farces on Indian delinquency, or thy random and exaggerated execrations of the French Revolution. Recollection may concentrate, for thy benefit, all the horrors which those execrations have heightened!

"The proper office of that recollection will be to impress on thy spirit, that thou hast bowed the obsequious knee to powers thou hadst denounced; and, when those powers seemed disposed to reward thy servility, thou didst not scruple to desert the cause (whether good or evil, is of no import) of that people thou hadst

long

long pleaded;—not remembering, or disdaining to remember, that thy rewards, serving as pillows for thy aged and aching head, were wrung from poverty and want. In thy situation, and with thy consciousness, I could not have sat down to my daily meal, without seeing the asking eyes of starving widows and orphans ranged around my table.

"But thou wilt find them in thy retreat!—when thou wilt experience, that *his* reflections are dreadful who prostitutes the gifts of genius. Prevent the utmost consequences of this offence. At the day of general doom, it will be suffered to carry its own punishment; for, in corrupting, it renders itself a prey to the 'worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not 'quenched.'

"In directing the best uses to be made of thy retirement, where thou mayest be prepared to assume some new character, and to atone for former offences, I, at the same time, pronounce judgment on those offences, which may be an important lesson to all those spirits who attend to it.

"Though reputed a SAGE by thy disciples on earth,

earth, thou art now sensible that thou wert ignorant of real science, and acquainted but superficially with elegant literature.

"The Emperor JOSEPH II. said justly, 'I 'love men of science, but I hate *beaux esprits*.' The former are always useful, and employ language to instruct and inform: the latter study phrases to serve their own purposes, whether good or evil.

"Not far from thy retreat, thou wilt find the first scientific spirits of thy globe, with NEWTON at their head, improving themselves by recollection and conversation.

"They will teach thee candidly to examine how many precise ideas; how many notions, accurately defined, and intelligible even to thyself, are contained in any or all thy publications; the analysis of which, will leave on thy mind something like the effect of a brawling stream on thy ears.

"They will point out thy theories as labyrinths of petty difficulties, which a sophist only can develop or explain, and, when explained, appear to be of no utility or importance.

"Thy philosophy was a species of poetic metaphysics,

taphysics, without principles or axioms; vague, flexible, and easily applied to any purposes convenient to the possessor. The sages of that region will teach thee to perceive, that the expansion of thy intellectual and moral faculties, has been unhappily influenced by ambition, and by a superstition injurious as it was despicable.

"Thou wilt be kindly received by the spirits of men, on whom thou hast dashed the corrosive drops of calumny, and on whose interests thou hast made the moisture of heaven act as the dews of death. LIBERTY, which thou hast regarded with a feeling analogous to the hydrophobia, will hail thee in her orderly domains: and PHILOSOPHY, at whose name thy pen was ever dipped in some poisonous drug, will correct thy diseased notions, and convince thee, she is the best friend of humanity. Thy mind will be shocked by reflecting on the public taste of thy time, which was so depraved, and on the state of general knowledge, which was so shallow and desultory, that if BACON or NEWTON had been living, and opposed simple and demonstrated truths to thy rumbling, noisy sentences, they would have been overlooked in contempt;

or deterred from opposing the principles of sound reason to the sophisms of romantic eloquence.

" Newton, who, by the patient deductions of science, made men first acquainted with a general and important law of the universe, and whose glory is unparalleled, would have been overwhelmed by the barbaric phraseology of a parliamentary brawler: for, in traducing philosophy, thou hast opposed the powers of a partisan to the principles of this immortal man; which pervade all inquiries, and govern all departments of real knowledge. When enlisted among the votaries of Truth, thou wilt imitate his luminous but patient investigations, and feel his contempt of all passionate and interested oppositions. His principles must be extended to all truths, enlighten every human pursuit, and no theories will be admitted which are not susceptible of calculation and precision.

" It is not from men, who dress up tawdry chimeras, offer vague explanations, and embarrass the simple truth with the jargon of the schools, that the world is to expect the accurate principles of social union; but from those who have

have profoundly studied the laws which govern the phenomena of the universe, and apply them to all the possible combinations of the moral world.

" Men have already weighed the air, determined the velocity of light, and disarmed thundering *Jupiter* of half his terrors;—wholly by scientific analyses: And is HUMAN SOCIETY, the asylum, the parent of all human science, to be left to poetic buffoonry, to venal oratory, misleading the refuse of the human race!!

" Truths which, in thy early youth, were acquired by laborious efforts of memory, and were but seldom comprehended by those who learnt them, thou mayest assist in unfolding, in methods suited to general capacities: and as the modes of expressing scientific combinations will be simplified and improved, there will probably be NO OCCASION FOR ORATORS; and thou mayest be employed in rendering them unnecessary.

" These truths require thy most deliberate meditation. The councils of Britain, on which European Liberty fixes an anxious eye, require all the genius and talents that can be called to

their aid,—successfully to oppose that CONCENTRATION OF REVOLUTIONARY PRINCIPLES which has taken place, and which may inspire France with the pernicious and oppressive ambition of ancient Rome.

" But thy temper and spirit must be changed, that thou mayest influence and change those of thy devotees, or be invested with a new character, to atone for former errors. The serpent, vanity, coiled around thee, must be torn off, and thy ambition limited and corrected.

" To aspire to the empire of Genius, is the infirmity of secondary orders of minds. Thou, like *Robespierre*, wouldst have sacrificed all talents, and reigned alone in the dusky empire of imbecility.'

" The aspect of JACOBINISM was often unquestionably hideous: the raging fervours of thy mind had also a savage hue; and never, like the sensibilities of superior natures, disposed to soften and lead men to wisdom. In thy animadversions and reproaches, thy frown was that of rancor, not of generous anger; thy wit was laughing malice; and thy vindictive justice often bristled the hair with horror!

" Hasten

"Hasten to qualify thyself for the instruction of thy disciples, that they may not, like thee, ALIENATE THE BEST FRIENDSHIPS, AND CONVERT RIVALS INTO ENEMIES; that they may not, by retrenching some facts, by misrepresenting others, by groundless insinuations and suppositions, give Truth the physiognomy of Falsehood, or Patriotism that of Conspiracy.

"Thou hast substituted the irrascibility of selfishness for the genuine love of thy Country; and covered the fairest purposes, even of the Government thou wert pledged to support, with the foulest fogs.

"In thy humour and pleasantry, ADDISON justly observed, the sober smile of playfulness is never seen. Thy wit carries a tomahawk; and, though the dexterity of the bearer be allowed, the intention of the blow is frequently abhorred.

"The eye of public sympathy honoured thy sorrow on a domestic calamity,—such as thou hadst indirectly occasioned to thousands. How many childless parents were then cursing thy name!

"CONYERS MIDDLETON, who has been

long improving his own taste and judgment by the conversations of *Xenophon* and *Cicero*, observed, as he examined thee on *language*, that the portions of thy works which exasperated Europe the most, and gave a character of atrocity to the war against France, wholly foreign to the intentions and interests of the Governments engaged in it, were the rhetorical exaggerations of the orator of a savage horde.

"Thou, and thy disciples, being but superficially acquainted with the sciences, magnitudes are contemplated, but not computed. All objects, moral as well as physical, are susceptible of precise valuation; and every species of truth may be submitted to calculation.

"Thy literature, and that of thy adherents, is the literature of a school; the figures and metaphors of ancient poetry, giving false lustre to indeterminate ideas. Thy advocate JOHNSON could only apologise; when the modest LOCKE marked thy inaccuracies, from an unacquaintance with Algebraic language; the only language truly analytic and accurate; bearing the nearest analogy to the processes of the human mind; and the instrument most ap-

plicable to all the combinations of our ideas. But, instead of soberly determining and fixing men's ideas, thy works and thy orations, verbose, vague, and destitute of precision, confounded them. There is a noisy turmoil in thy periods, as in thy nature, unfavourable to correct information and knowledge.

"There is often a puerile gaudiness in thy style, as much at enmity with real grace, as with real information. Thou hast often embossed rotten wood, and painted insignificant objects with the brightest hues.

"Thy general phraseology has a glitter for the vulgar eye, not the polish of classic elegance. Compare it with the fine passages of MIDDLETON, or with those of his copyist JUNIUS: it will be the difference of the hatchet and the plane. To paint, thou and thy disciples must daub; to punish, you must mangle; and to kill, you must inflict protracted torments, that shall harrow every atom of sensibility.

"Away to thy retreat! Prepare thyself for revisiting the scenes thou hast contributed to embroil.

"Science

" Science is succeeding Eloquence in all the arrangements of Europe. Every step of an aspiring power is under her guidance. She is, every where, marking the points of security and encroachment; wholly regardless of phrases and orations; employed only in the mummery of audiences and exhibitions.

" Be instructed, to chase from the councils of thy country, the vague brawlers for contention and warfare; and to assist in discovering that VEHICLE OF SENSIBILITY, which will convey the admonitions of Truth, and induce Europe to PROVIDE FOR HER OWN SALVATION."

EGERIA.

NINTH STUDY.

IDEAS OF LIBERTY, ANCIENT AND MODERN.

On quitting the court, we joined Plato, Aristotle, and John Locke; who generally applauded the observations of the judge. But said—

PLATO.

Oratory, and oratorical writers, I perceive, will be soon expelled the province of political philosophy.

ARISTOTLE.

It was certainly not the intention of Minos to discredit eloquence in its proper provinces.

He justly stigmatised orators of slaughter, sanguinary sages, and the hypocritical priests of desolation: impetuous spirits, who have always viewed with hatred the mild but permanent glory of those who have sought, with philosophic modesty, the recluse abode of science, or those who have patiently attempted to harmonize the various and complicated plans of general good.

The brilliancy of evil is more easily acquired. Mere fury may touch, with infernal fire, councils of death or cabinets of blood.

LOCKE.

The fiends of war, on earth, have been lately wearied, and seem disposed to retire to their native Tartarus. Shall the ambition of one man be suffered to assume the voice of virtue, religion or patriotism, to call them back, and to stimulate them to wider scenes of slaughter? The prince of darkness, shrouded with idolatrous and fanatical superstition, is again assuming the name of the *most high*, that his bloody altars may be holy, and his priests inviolate; and despotism openly to destroy the independence and

and laws of nations, wears the form, and uses the language of LIBERTY.

PLATO.

Despotism must have more sagacity than I have ever possessed—for I have not yet been able to learn either its nature or its form.

[*At this moment Moses, Minos and Alfred entered the grove; followed by Zoroaster, Confucius, attending to the great masters of human reasoning, Bacon, Newton, Euclid, Archimedes, &c. &c. The grove was crowded; if the expression may be applied to a numerous assemblage of the spirits of the greatest men, of all ages and nations, desirous of hearing or assisting in conversations interesting to humanity, held in the presence of* EGERIA.]

LOCKE.

I do not wonder at it. For, in the plan of thy republic, thou hast commenced with an arbitrary division of the people into three classes: the class of warriors or guardians of the state; that of sages, to perform the offices of magistrates; and that of the labouring mul-

titude, which thou hast denominated mercenaries, to avoid the appellation of slaves.*

ARISTOTLE.

We, whom you call the ancients, had certainly no idea, such as some modern philosophers would realize; that of a society uniting or forming into one mind all the minds of the people; having the sensibility and moral faculties of an individual; possessing passions, a will and understanding.

In such a state, which is yet imaginary, nothing intellectually or morally wrong, could be politically right; necessity could never sanction injustice; and NEWTON, the first intellectual spirit, would be the first magistrate of the earth.

LOCKE.

I would appeal to that great master of human reasoning, (looking at Newton) by whose conversations I have lately corrected many of my

* Plat. de Rep. L. II.

my favourite ideas; whether the men who depreciate politics, by comparing the supposed uncertainty of its principles with those of mathematics, either can or will see, that those sciences are, and ever will be, in precisely similar situations.

When mathematicians can determine the value to which quantities, in infinite progression, *incessantly approach but never attain;* the political philosopher will apply a similar process, with similar certainty, to the calculation of moral effects.

In politics, as in mathematics, the theories which determine the ratios of evanescent quantities, and which, by various processes, deduce from those ratios the proportions of magnitudes, have precisely the same results, though not the same SOCIAL effects. This distinction was not perceived by CONDORCET (regarding him) one of the honest, but mistaken enthusiasts of the French Revolution.

There is no difference, in scientific result or accuracy, between the effects of what is called the *calculus of infinities*, &c. when applied either to mathematical or political problems.

But they are not studied by persons equally qualified or prepared; and the difference is great in SOCIAL EFFECT. In mathematics, all the superfluous portions are thrown into an imagined infinite space; but in politics there is no vacuum; every atom, every person, is part of a mass or body of interested sensibility; and in modern times every person is a politician. Orators, poets, women, men of all professions, and even of all trades, even when they have failed in their destined occupations, never hesitate in issuing dogmas in the most intricate and most difficult of all the sciences.

EGERIA [TO LOCKE.]

I should have perceived the effects of thy conversations with NEWTON, if thou hadst not so candidly acknowledged them.

The next employment of that immortal spirit, or of some genius of similar powers, may be the improvement of political science. He has ascertained the principal laws which regulate natural phenomena; and it is to be hoped, the same certainty may be soon introduced into the moral world, by ascertaining its laws.

It

It is, however, a consolation to humanity, that no considerable progress is made in one, without affecting every science. It is by the application of theories and methods, belonging to departments of knowledge, overlooked by tyranny, that men may ascertain those political truths which observation, experience and meditation may offer; until methods appropriate to the science itself be invented, affording additional instruments to genius in attaining the discoveries it ardently pursues, or in leading to others which it never expected or imagined. But let us return to the subject first started: or we shall not recover PLATO from the region of reveries into which I perceive he is relapsing.

ARISTOTLE.

I do not suppose we can prove the ancient republics to have possessed LIBERTY. Locke will assert, that all bodies, whether natural or political, having no GENERAL WILL, cannot be FREE.

It appears to me, that all communities, however imperfect their organization, are susceptible of some general feeling, as the most imper-

fect animals have a sense of touch; and that a political constitution, conferring on a whole people the capacity of energetic and active volition, is an idea only.

The faculty of selecting the means of obtaining good and avoiding evil, may be imparted to classes and orders, but I think not to the organization of the whole community.—And, if that be case, modern as well as ancient states must be destitute of liberty.

Indeed BURKE has asserted, in the face of Europe, that wherever the French nobles and priests reside, there we are to find FRANCE.

LOCKE.

But this is now generally considered as one of the extravagancies of his imagination; which, tinged with superstition, was not at the time without its method or its views.

It has ever been a maxim of the court of Rome, *Ubi Papa, ibi Roma;* the residence of the pope being always deemed ROME.

This is the ground on which the Roman Catholics of Ireland continue their claims to its estates; on which the abbey-lands of England,

land, whoever may possess them, are deemed the property of the church; and on which the whole island of Great Britain, in Cambrian traditions, is said to be the property of the descendants of Cambrian princes and nobles, generally reduced to the lowest occupations, plunged into mines, or roving as beggars.

The voice of Burke, on this subject, may, like that of St. Patrick, be hailed through Ireland and Wales by the populace of those regions; but will not affect the real definition of a country, by those who regulate its fate.

It is true, as Aristotle has observed, that I object to the application of the word Liberty to communities that have no capacities of volition. The ancient Republics, as they were called, possessed large masses, in the lower orders of their population—whether denominated people or slaves, which had feelings of pain and pleasure, no doubt; but no general consciousness and general perception, producing a collective opinion or judgment.

These powers are in exact proportion to the excellence of the arrangements of the people, called

led their organization ; for these artificial bodies, when acted upon by the same powers, exhibit similar phenomena with natural bodies, and therefore possess similar properties.

The defect or imperfection of the ancient republics from the general slavery of the industrious and laborious, affected their capacity, to develope any thing analogous to a general will, the source of general liberty. A constitution, without an organic arrangement of all the people, would be like an animal without the sense of general feeling, incapable of forming any thing like volition or judgment.

ARISTOTLE.

It appears to me that the wisdom of Providence, a phrase I now prefer to that of the wisdom of Nature, has its purposes to serve, by gradations in the political as in the natural world ; that the little tyrannies of the earth, like its little reptiles, have been necessarily and usefully generated ; and that no other political bodies could have been formed in the same circumstances.

The

The moderns seem, therefore, to differ from us more in the order wherein they are placed, than by the political talents they have exerted.

I would appeal to the great master of political organization, the British ALFRED, whether the *emancipation of servants in modern societies without suitable regulations*, and the *unlimited license of the lower orders to burthen the public with a vicious population*, be not inconveniences as great as those of slavery; as it renders those orders equally unsusceptible of that common sensibility and sympathy which are the foundations of liberty.

ALFRED.

I wish not, at this time, to engage in the debate; but I will so far answer the question of ARISTOTLE, that the idea entertained by modern philosophers of political liberty, of a state governing itself by a senate, council or sensorium, furnished by the sensibility and will of all the people, is impracticable in the present condition of its *populace* and *servants*.

ARISTOTLE.

ARISTOTLE.

I really think, adopting the analogy of Locke, respecting natural bodies, that many of the ancient and modern tyrannies have existed in conditions more natural, and enjoying more *civil liberty* than any of those institutions called Republics.

I will not dispute on the seat or size of their sensoria or brains, or the connection between their sensibility and their will.

I might, however, play with analogies in his way, and, directly in favour of monarchy, observe, that the brain or sensorium of the worm is a single nerve, with ramifications, undulating to the skin. In insects it assumes different forms; is larger in fish; more so in birds; and gradually increases as the animal is endued with sagacity, until it becomes the organ of man, which no anatomist has proved to consist of more than one nerve, formed into a complex organ, and sending its ramifications to every part of the body.

LOCKE.

I do not dispute that great portions of *civil liberty*

liberty have been enjoyed, where no ideas of *political* liberty were ever entertained.

Even in Turkey, under wise and benevolent princes, the administration of justice, and the regulations of civil intercourse, have been occasionally admirable. The monarchy of France, which admitted no claim of political liberty, or of a power in the people to affect the constitution of its government, and the formation of the laws, seemed disposed to soften and improve by the improvements of the times, and to allow in the general administration of the laws, the operation of many of the wisest maxims of civil liberty. But in such circumstances the end of society, *civil liberty*, is only occasionally obtained; it depends on fortuitous circumstances; and is not essential to the constitution and government of the state.

This, I believe, is a modern discovery, presented to mankind, in its full form and effect, by ALFRED—I mean the discovery of NATIONAL REPRESENTATION.

As in the human body the senses are formed to convey to the mind the arrangements and dispositions

dispositions of things that may affect it, colours and sound, heat and cold; so in communities, by the discovery of Alfred, the council or senate, or mind of the state, is furnished with informations, the means of wisdom, according to the nature and number of those organs or senses communicating with them.

ALFRED.

I must again interpose—Whether Locke justly or unjustly ascribes to me the discovery of what he calls the doctrine of REPRESENTATION, may be considered on another occasion.

He is guilty of an error, which, under the direction of the best and most benevolent of his disciples*, has been the source of numerous calamities. I never included, in my political organization, the *lower orders* of the people, attached to the soil and in a state of slavery.

LOCKE.

* See the MODELS of all the late constitutions of France in The IDEA OF A COMMON-WEALTH; in LETTERS ON POLITICAL LIBERTY; and in the ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT DIVISION OF THE ENGLISH NATION INTO HUNDREDS AND TITHINGS.

LOCKE.

They have been, since that time, generally emancipated, and may therefore be included in the organization of a state.

ALFRED.

But how? That to me is the grand problem of political science. Point out the mode of rendering the condition of the laborious and industrious classes so easy, so comfortable, as to ensure in them sufficient *morality* (for there is no morality in hopeless misery) to confide to them those functions you call their rights, I will immediately sue for leave to revisit the earth, and, on the venerable fabric which still distinguishes my country, I will establish a political constitution perfectly free.

PLATO.

God speed thee! It is not from verbose orators, I must confess; it is not from the interested votaries of havoc and blood, that Europe can expect its recovery from the effects of its late madness, or to see several of its constitutions re-constructed;

structed; but from men, who, meditating on the graduated series of all animated existence, discern the laws by which all sensibility and all action are produced, in all degrees of arrangement and organization; from the most simple and feeble to the most complicated and forcible. Such men as ALFRED—such men alone, can ascertain the construction, the analogies and relations of political constitutions, and point out the laws that govern their union, their growth, their remedies, and their dissolution.

EGERIA.

Much as I venerate the name and talents of ALFRED, I cannot adopt all the enthusiasm and poetry of PLATO. Societies cannot be *rapidly* modified by the will or the power of individuals without incalculable injuries. I wish, therefore, to have the comparative views of ancient and modern states completed, before we consider the modifications, reforms, and regenerations, which are to improve and perfect them.

LOCKE.

I do not affirm that the republics of modern

times, are more republican than those of antiquity; not being, as they were not, equally formed from all parts of their population and territories.

Germany, Russia, and the Northern Powers, have all their characters, or, what may be called, their ruling intentions; but they are not generally in favour of Liberty.

France, before its Revolution, was an absolute monarchy, claiming all political powers, which were checked and directed in their exercise by the improving customs and manners of the times.

By the Revolution it was plunged into a chaos; from which it is emerging with mingled, but menacing dispositions.

Britain is the only State in which the modern principles of *political* liberty have had a real, permanent effect.

America does not yet offer an example. Its political principles cannot be put to any trial, until the population of its States overflows on the States themselves, instead of being disposed of by advantageous emigrations.

The example of America, in the pretended

reformation of ancient European States, has therefore been pleaded and adopted without judgment.

Its revolution had a general effect; not so much by the writings which discussed the Rights of Man; for those writings repeated old tales which reached readers only: it was the rumour which penetrated the most enslaved portions of the most enslaved nations, that the lowest classes of the people had rights, and that those classes in America had wrested them from their oppressors.

But in America, there were no classes analogous to those which constitute the greater part of the population of Europe.

The small number of slaves it possessed were not counted in its population, and had no political effect. It had scarcely any servants, which in Europe form a class of the utmost importance; for by its intercourse with all the classes of tradesmen in every country, and by perpetually passing the most expert of its adventurers into those classes, it acts as a perpetual and poisonous spring on the morals of those orders which are the first

links of the social chain; and forms the first and necessary intercourses of respectable families with their neighbourhood, into a complex system of dishonesty and fraud.

America had no POPULACE, which in Europe constitutes a formidable portion, if not the majority of the inhabitants of its great towns. This is created by its surplus population, unknown in America; and that surplus consisting of persons born and educated to subsist by stratagem.

It is this *superabundant population*, the general inlet of misery, which first tries the nature and force of political institutions; and those of America, not having undergone this trial, cannot be adduced as examples for the reformation or regeneration of European States; for their nature and effects in similar circumstances have not been ascertained.

ARISTOTLE.

If America, the constitutions of which are said to be improvements on the best of modern States, furnish no certain example of superior liberty—

liberty—you must leave the question doubtful, Whether the moderns have materially advanced in political science?

LOCKE.

I have not asserted that the Americans furnish no useful hints on the subject of Liberty; but that their constitutional arrangements are not proper examples for the reformation of European States.

BRITAIN alone has furnished the most practicable—France, the most terrific, and perhaps the most useful, lessons, on the principles and the progress of Liberty.

FRANCE would lead us into a tedious and difficult discussion; and her Revolution has hitherto produced nothing which can be decidedly ascertained in favour of Liberty. But the CONSTITUTION OF ENGLAND, in its general construction, and in many of its provisions in favour of personal and political Liberty, contains improvements peculiar to the moderns; superadded to all the advantages of ancient institutions.

EGERIA.

EGERIA.

These are the truths I wish to have pointed out in a clear, but summary manner.

I also wish the subject to be treated, not in the common order, as suggested by the British History. The origin of its Parliament, its Charter, its Petition of Rights, its Habeas Corpus, and its Trial by Jury, are universally and justly admired. They are not, however, without their difficulties: but the general result, the pecuniary power, the monied interest, is an enigma in political science, to the greater part of the world; perhaps even to those who wield that power, and direct that interest.

It would be useful to my views, that the acknowledged excellencies of the British Constitution be assumed, and their effects, particularly those of its pecuniary power, be developed.

ARISTOTLE.

Egeria, therefore, evades the question of comparative Liberty?——

EGERIA.

EGERIA.

No! I only change the order which you seem to have intended for the subjects: knowing the principal ground on which Locke will proceed, that of *National Representation*, will be disputed by a most formidable enemy; and my present services to Europe depending greatly on right ideas of property, and particularly of money, the instrument of its circulation—I am desirous to have the subject discussed.

LOCKE.

I have no objection, as it does not really violate the order of our Inquiries, as property, and something analogous to money, have certainly been objects of attention, previous to those which may be denominated forms of government, or constitutions of society.

[*The spirits moved in an airy and beautiful column to another scene; where a dialogue ensued on* MONEY, *the subject of the next Study.*]

EGERIA.

TENTH STUDY.

MONEY.

——————— ce Rien precieux
Plus puissant que L'Amour, qui peut tout sur les Dieux.
LA FONTAINE.

THE airy column halted in a region which EGERIA denominated the dominion of PLUTUS; because the inhabitants, like those of other probationary regions allotted to departed spirits, are subject to regulations suited to the dispositions acquired on earth, and the vices or faults they are encouraged to correct.

Groups of financiers, stock-jobbers, bankers, contractors, monopolists, and swindlers, were scattered over spaces that might form terrestrial

kingdoms: and having borne with them, from the earth, the errors, prejudices, or vices, which had actuated their pursuits, they either rehearsed their former follies, or they underwent corrective processes for their re-appearance; or they were pronounced incorrigible, and destined, at their final judgment, to those confines of Tartarus which terminated, by an ocean of molten metals, the dreary and melancholy portion of their peculiar horison.

On the verge of this region, is the general abode of the ŒCONOMISTS, whose minds on earth have been occupied without being wholly corrupted and enslaved by riches and money.

EGERIA immediately pointed out ABEL, the father of agriculture, industry, and legitimate property; as CAIN is of war, depredation, and the rights of conquest and violence; JOSEPH and ENOCH, in conversation with QUESNAI, and JAMES STEWART*; and numerous other spirits,

* The INQUIRY ON POLITICAL ŒCONOMY, by Sir James Stewart, is the most comprehensive and profound Treatise existing in that province of human knowlege; but to peruse it with pleasure and profit, requires preparatory science, and a habit

spirits, appertaining to ages and nations, of which history had not furnished me with any intimations or knowlege.

MOSES TO THE ASSEMBLY.

Whether any of the distinguished spirits assembled here, may be soon transferred into human society, to diminish the perplexities of economical and financial ignorance—is not within our knowledge!—but it is, that we should be prepared by a discussion of those subjects which are immediately connected with human events.

Europe has been lately desolated by war; in

habit of developing intricate combinations. It is therefore ſtudied by a few perſons only; ſome of whom become celebrated Authors, by detailing portions of its treasures.

It is not the wish or the interest of the writer of this Note, to detract from the fame or utility of the *Hiſtory of the Wealth of Nations*. It is a valuable work of detail and illuſtration; but all its important truths and maxims are stated in the INQUIRY: yet *Adam Smith* never mentions *Sir James Stewart*. What would have been ſaid of the vanity of *Burke* if he had attempted to obscure *Longinus?* or never alluded to his Treatiſe on the Sublime, from which he drew his principal maxims?

which avarice as well as ambition has had its influence.

Desolation, arousing consideration and thought in detached philanthropists, is daily depriving the votaries of war of their sophisms and pretences; and, by the appearance in these regions of the gentle NYMPH OF PEACE, we may presume the benefit of our present deliberations will soon reach the human race.

The atrocity of CAIN on ABEL, has been continued, in nearly uninterrupted succession, by the moral descendants of the one, on the moral descendants of the other; by ambition, violence, and fraud; on labour, industry, and integrity.

It is our business to prepare for that period, when the souls of all the votaries of violence, cruelty, and perfidy, shall finally wear the forms of lions, tygers, panthers, and hyenas; when human societies shall be directed by principles analogous to the affections and reason of men; not the cunning and the passions of brutes.

DIVINE EGERIA! Behold before thee, the principal authors of the truths and errors

now

now actuating Europe on the subject of riches. Their discussions may assist some of thy purposes, which are always benevolent, always directed to the peace and happiness of mankind.

EGERIA.

It is one object of my mission, to disentangle the complicated ideas which discussions on riches and money have produced among men; and I cannot be more competently instructed than by attending to this assembly.

MOSES.

I need not inform thee, amiable and intelligent nymph, this assembly is at a great distance from infallibility and perfection.

The spirit and disposition which first actuated CAIN to obtain, by violence, the fruits of his brother's attention and care, is the spirit of war and conquest; and the general origin of that property, which has not been produced by labour, industry, and the useful exercise of genius and talents.

To

To prevent superfluous discussion, I shall state those previous truths in political economy, from whence we may proceed to the question before us.

The reason of man, directing labour in collecting spontaneous, and creating artificial productions, supplies all the necessaries and conveniences of life.

Reason, putting labour in motion, and collecting its surplus produce, forms capital, which furnishes means of multiplying that labour.

Division of labour multiplies the surplus produce; and the disposal of that surplus creates exchanges, first by barter, then by money; and, giving rise to trade and commerce, introduces new principles of economy, and even of morals.

Here you stand.

EGERIA.

Nothing would be more useful to Europe, at this time, than a conviction that this road to riches cannot be shortened by war and depredation.

tion. It has been desolated by religious wars, which left scarcely a virtuous principle in any of its states.—And it is now actuated by a spirit of hostility, on the subject of commercial prosperity, which retards and prevents that prosperity. ENGLAND has not surmounted all her errors on riches, and particularly on commerce. FRANCE, at least the government of France, seems to be wholly actuated by prejudices.

ALFRED.

I do not mean to interrupt the present discussion—but the difference between Britain and France is very important, from the different condition of their people, and their different capacity, or susceptibility of public sentiments and principles.—Britain is so arranged, its different classes are so connected, and in such a state of sympathy, that it possesses a general SENSIBILITY to all national sentiments. FRANCE has not yet risen above what HALLER would denominate IRRITABILITY, of which it possesses a great portion. France is alive

alive to all impressions; but they may be various, contradictory and destructive of each other, at the will of the impressing power.—This is not owing to any defect in Frenchmen as individuals, who are not inferior to any individuals in Europe; but to the various causes, particularly to the wars, which have held the organization of the people in its first state, that of irritability; perhaps the most favourable to the formation of modern armies, and the stability of modern tyrannies.

I interpose these sentiments from a love of justice.

QUESNAI.

It is in thy usual manner, most equitable and admirable prince!—If the government of France, at this important period, were under the direction of a spirit analogous to thine, we should not be insulted with the barbarous phrases of *conquering Peace,* and *conquering Commerce.*

The habits of England lead to commercial monopolies; those of France to war. By a conquest of English territories, or even of England, France would not succeed to its com-

mercial wealth; nor would England, by the destruction of France, succeed to the possession of its military spirit.

STEWART.

It is a pleasure to discuss such a subject with such a mind as that of Quesnai.

For the reason assigned by the great Alfred, the most estimable philosopher of France, and no nation abounds with philosophers more estimable, are obliged to consider questions of this nature in the abstract. BRITAIN, who has advanced beyond all other nations in commercial experience, has advanced by steps necessary in the commencement of such undertakings; *i. e.* by the formation of companies, and the creation of monopolies.

In certain conditions of nations, individuals never travel but in parties or caravans; and never trade but in companies. When those companies should be dissolved, is not a question of abstract speculation, or often a consideration of government: at the proper time they dissolve, or discontinue themselves; and they are never justifiable

justifiable subjects of war, but when defended from violence and depredation.

QUESNAI.

But BRITAIN has formed its commercial establishments into political and military states in subordination to itself, and to make war on those subordinate states, it considers, not only as making war on itself, but on commerce. Whereas FRANCE sees, in those states, only the abuses of monopoly; and when it attempts their destruction, it means only to destroy in Britain the oppressive system of monopoly.

STEWART.

It was with similar apologies that ROME made war on the prosperity of CARTHAGE; but its actuating reasons were, a general ambition, and the vain imagination which now actuates the government of FRANCE, and which is founded on a similar ignorance of the nature of RICHES and MONEY; that, by seizing and subduing rich settlements and rich states, it must succeed to all their riches.

When

When ROME had conquered CARTHAGE, it bestowed on SCIPIO a false renown, which history will erase, when history is instructed in its duties, and converted extensive and fertile regions into oceans of barren sands; these are the uniform and necessary effects of military conquests. Military leaders, and military governments, know nothing of riches and money, but in contributions to support troops. It is possible that SCIPIO found not, in the whole city of Carthage, as much of that sort of money as he might have seized in the baggage of a proconsul returning to Rome, after a successful predatory administration. And LONDON, where fortune will never lead a French army in the present temper and condition of Britain: LONDON is, of all the cities in the world, the most destitute of what such calculators as Buonaparte and his brethren in arms, call money.

QUESNAI.

But it is the power conferred on Britain by its monopolies, and the use it makes of that power in Europe, that ever irritates the government of France against her.

STEWART.

STEWART.

I will not attempt to justify all the uses made by BRITAIN of her power, unless you should wish to compare her, in that respect, with FRANCE. But I affirm that her power is not owing to her monopolies: many of them weaken her; and yet they cannot be abandoned, without greater injury than can arise from that reduction of strength. Many of the most opulent of her settlements, though they enrich individuals, bestow on the country only the very doubtful effect of a balance, which, by entering a full circulation, raises prices against the laborious and industrious.

The power of BRITAIN arises from the nature and state of its labour and industry; from that sympathetic arrangement of all its orders and classes, which may be truly called its organisation, which bestows a real sensibility on all the sound and healthy parts of the body of the nation, which renders it susceptible of a higher degree of public spirit, and capable of a more uniform

uniform and permanent exertion, than any nation on earth.

In FRANCE, which approaches the nearest to it, but whose pretensions are much superior, public declarations, sentiments and events, have seldom any instantaneous effects beyond the walls of Paris; in BRITAIN, they instantly vibrate from the Orkneys to the Land's End.

QUESNAI.

I wish FRANCE would remain at peace until she had acquired this sensibility, this CAPACITY OF PUBLIC PRINCIPLE.

STEWART.

I often hoped it would have been the indemnity for the complicated miseries of its revolution; but its repetition of organisations and reorganisations, have been the mockeries of adventurers, who used them as sheaths, variously disguised and decorated, for the same bloody sword, destined to rule and enslave it.

In this state of France, rich in military resources, and possessing a vast territory in the centre

centre of Europe; an enlightened plan of policy and commerce; and a liberal tolerance of other powerful nations, which is a necessary part of such a plan, is not to be expected. BRITAIN ITSELF is not more interested in its own general commerce, than FRANCE is in that commerce; it is not so much interested in its own monopolies.

The first part of this proposition has been repeatedly proved in my INQUIRY; more at large in the HISTORY OF THE WEALTH OF NATIONS; and still more in various commentaries and explanations of that work.

The latter part I will illustrate by a supposed example. If the French expedition to Egypt had succeeded to the expulsion of the English from India, the consequence would have been, not a transfer of riches of India to France, for such riches cannot be transferred, but an extinction of many branches of commerce, now affording subsistence and comfort to millions, with very little, perhaps no abatement, of the real strength of BRITAIN. On the other hand, if FRANCE, or until France can acquire a national mind, if its government could be instructed to trade to

India,

India, after the manner of America, with superior advantages, it might act on truly philosophical principles of commerce, and leave to BRITAIN the equivocal effects of its necessary monopolies. It would soon obtain the cream of that commerce. No! says a military hero, I will seize the cow; and in the attempt the animal is killed.

QUESNAI.

I am not a politician, I am only an economist. I know no immediate remedy for this menacing evil; it must operate the effects it produced by the prevalence of ROME over CARTHAGE, and by the universal despotism, ignorance, and darkness it produced.

EGERIA.

That remedy is similar to all the remedies projected in the French revolution, which all commenced with the dissolution or destruction of the thing to be remedied. In the medical world, the semi-quacks, who have pretended to ascertain the various sorts of air which com-

pose the human body, and proposed to furnish any that may be wanting in its composition, have not yet proceeded to the extravagance of proposing its dissolution, in order to recompose it. This is precisely the proposition of modern reformers. The Roman hypocrisy rested simply on the pretence of assisting the oppressed in other states, against their oppressors, covering the determination to involve both in destruction.

One of the principles of French reformers has been copied from the Roman policy, of interference with the internal administration of other nations; and if the experiment, now supposed to be intended on Britain, could have been made in 1792, we might have had the story of ROME and CARTHAGE repeated. But at this time it seems impracticable: for though France may have greatly added to her military skill and strength, BRITAIN has acquired UNANIMITY; she has purged her political body of those nests of vermin, called political societies, which had nearly burrowed into her vitals, and she now appears in a healthy and vigorous condition.

CARTHAGE

CARTHAGE was sacrificed to her own divisions, rather than to the valour of Roman banditti, called armies: no banditti can subdue BRITAIN, if she continue, as she now seems to be, true to HERSELF.

The cases are not similar in several respects; and I hope, for the interest of humanity, the event will be very different. The similarity consists principally in the error concerning RICHES, and the lure of plunder, held out to depraved and unprincipled armies, by ambitious and ferocious leaders.

Those leaders are assiduous in fostering principles, which would disgrace hordes of savages, in their intercourse with each other.

I expect not that chiefs, bred in camps, and enured to bloodshed and misery, would sacrifice the smallest gratification of their ambition to considerations of public good or humanity; but I should hope to influence BRITAIN by considerations of a public nature, added to those of the interest of all its inhabitants.

The spurious, unnatural power, generated by the French revolution, would not only extin-

guish every spark of civil and political liberty in Europe; but it would be particularly gratified in destroying that beautiful SYSTEM OF CREDIT, which is peculiar to BRITAIN; which a government, like that of France, can never establish, and which is a perpetual stigma on that government.

LOCKE.

This is a novelty in politics: how often have the prophets of destruction foretold the ruin of BRITAIN from its CREDIT.

STEWART.

I do not affirm there can be no riches without such a system; but I am sure there can be no MONEY, properly so called; and it would be a less misfortune to humanity if all the armies of Europe, and all their leaders (some of whom however are most respectable men) were obliterated from the earth, than that the discovery made in Britain of the nature and use of MONEY, and the SYSTEM OF CREDIT erected on it, should be affected or destroyed.

QUESNAI.

This is rather severe. When the French reformers first stated their pretensions and plan of government, I said, 'It is the young oak, whose roots may be firmly fixed by a storm.' But the plan has been defeated; and every blockhead can exclaim, the vanquished are in the wrong! The errors of that event have produced numerous and powerful armies, in which the general government of Europe is now invested: armies thus constituted are perpetual checks on the progress of national improvements, and the instruments of national ruin: armies, and the despots generally leading them, think they find their glory and their interests in interrupting the acquisitions of knowledge, and dissipating the accumulations of sober and honest industry. Substituting personal for social properties, they annihilate domestic morals and the felicities of general society. They diffuse a licentious ferocity and rapacious injustice; the effects of which are generally hostile

to the genuine and beneficent results of human intellect and human virtue!—How—when a ferocious chief cries, PLUNDER! will you persuade armies to refrain FOR THE ADVANTAGE OF MANKIND! Fields laid waste; hamlets fired; the desponding groans of widows, and the feeble shrieks of starving infants—these are the amusements and gratifications of chiefs whose talents are wholly warlike.

STEWART.

I would not address any such considerations to such chiefs: but I would impress on the minds of the people of Britain this certainty, if such chiefs could lead their hordes into that happy island, and they were disappointed, as they must be, in their promised booty; to assuage their fury its rivulets would soon swell with human blood; rape and slaughter would destroy multitudes of its best children; and desolation stalk through its flaming towns.

It is a fatal error in modern politics; in proportion as a man advances in rank and power, and riches, he relinquishes the personal faculties of defending and securing them.

HENRY

HENRY IV. of France, deliberating on a war with VENICE, was told by one of his ministers, the Venetian Senate was composed of WISE MEN. '*Ventre Saint-Gris!* (his usual oath) 'I'll dispatch to your wise men fifty thousand FOOLS, who will soon bring them to my reasons.' Why should wise men be the sport of fools? Why should the properties of a citizen exclude those of a man?

EGERIA.

It is with a view to induce every honest man, and every friend of his country, in Britain, to assume his proper station as the defender of his country, and particularly of its admirable institutions, that I wish to have those institutions explained.

It is upon those institutions, not on the government and people of Britain, that the military chiefs and armies of France would make war. They are the PUBLIC CREDIT, the REAL RICHES; the various portions of its CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTY, &c. &c. these are perpetual stigmas on a military despotism, which

cannot be withheld from the contemplation of mankind.

Around these, it is to be hoped, BRITONS will collect, not only its brave sailors, soldiers, and militia. but EVERY MAN WHO CAN CARRY A MUSKET.

If these institutions could be obliterated, Europe would present nothing reproachful to the most absolute and most capricious despotism; and it would require centuries to recover, in any part of it, what might, on British shores, be lost in a day; because citizens and freemen neglect an art which is committed to fools. This is the period to remedy an error so fatal; and it is hoped BRITAIN will not neglect it.

[*The subject is continued in the next* STUDY.]

EGERIA.

ELEVENTH STUDY.

MONEY.

———— ce Rien precieux
Plus puissant que L'Amour, qui peut tout sur les Dieux.
LA FONTAINE.

Continued from the preceding STUDY.

LOCKE.

THE NYMPH of PEACE has assumed a tone so warlike, that I have expected the transformation of her myrtle-crown into a casque; and that we should find ourselves in conversation with PALLAS instead of EGERIA.

EGERIA.

In traversing the deserts of Arabia, all passengers rouze their courage, and examine their

means of defence against the stratagems and violence of professed banditti. In how many respects are the laws of European nations improvements on the customs of Arabian hordes?

To preserve or to destroy the succession of a family in France, all Europe has been ten years steeped in human blood. Who can calculate the interruptions this contest has occasioned in the progress of the human mind, employed in multiplying the general improvement and happiness?

QUESNAI.

The errors and crimes of FRANCE, in the conduct of its revolution, created an anxiety in BRITAIN for its national security, which revived its ancient animosity; and which *injudicious and intemperate measures* rendered the principle of an indiscriminate project of destruction. This has exasperated FRANCE against BRITAIN: the two nations, however, are not only innocent of the atrocious purposes attributed by each to the other; they have the most serious and important reasons to insist upon and to maintain a real and permanent peace.

In

In the situation of an ambitious chief; in the most probable means of securing his power; in the recriminations of past injuries; and in the temptations of military plunder, there are pretences for war: but all are hostile to the interests of my country; and the advocates of them would be silenced and annihilated, if the country could express and enforce its own will—But the will of France, is the will of the government; and the will of the government, is the will or the caprice of its chief. This is a direful circumstance, not to France only, but to all Europe.

The interests of nations may be reduced into principles and laws, which may be studied and understood: but the caprices of an individual are daily changing forms, and they keep Europe in a state of constant agitation and apprehension of WAR.

EGERIA.

This is a description of FRANCE, by a Frenchman, as humiliating, as it is perplexing.

Many problems have occurred in the French revolution, but none so easy in the abstract,

and so insoluble in practice, as that which now presents itself, in the opposite inclinations and interests of the nation and its government; the one having every possible motive to peace, the other having motives to war, centering wholly in itself.

France cannot gain by the most successful war against Britain; by an unsuccessful attempt it might benefit, if there be a party which would seize the occasion to crush its government. By success, which would be merely the success of the government, it would lose every chance of recovering the smallest portion of civil and political liberty; its chains, now thrown loosely, would be drawn and riveted on every limb; the press, which now speaks only in Britain, would be wholly silenced; and the British institutions, which are now the stigmas of despotism, would be buried among the Fables of Liberty.

It is for the use of that numerous, though scattered party, which now pervades the whole of France, and which watches the proper occasion to assert its national interest, that I wish for information on the subject of riches; which, in the present state of things, might be

easily

easily obtained by France at home, but cannot be conquered and transferred from England.

QUESNAI.

Here you are at issue with the government, which is fertile in its means of deception; and which, in almost every case, may persuade an army of the probability of plunder.

EGERIA.

FRANCE certainly does not covet land. It is sufficiently rich in that species of property.

Moveable riches, which in Britain are at this time of superior importance, consisting of capitals converted into enterprizes of cultivation, industry, and commerce, are noble subjects of imitation for France, but cannot be conquered or plundered for its benefit.

Useful animals, utensils, seed; the accumulations and advances of labour and industry in agriculture; the materials, machines, and warehouses of manufacturers; and the masses of money or credit, which are the reservoirs of circulation: these are objects in BRITAIN of the greatest importance to the world, and par-

ticularly to France, as they furnish lessons which France may improve upon beyond any other power.

It is BRITAIN alone, and Britain in the most intimate intercourse of a real and lasting peace, that can save France from a fundamental error, incident to all military states, that the soil is the only consideration in constitutional arrangements.

Society is formed on the land; but the mere soil, and the use of its spontaneous productions, supports only detached animals and detached men, in the extremity of savage life.

Society is formed by SURPLUS LABOUR, advanced by one being towards the support of another: first, by parents to children; then on considerations of more extended affection, friendship, prudence, ambition, and the love of pleasure.

IT IS THIS INDUSTRY WHICH CREATES SOCIETY: and industry is the proper object of its fundamental laws.

This, however, may be absolutely unintelligible to the government of France: that government sees that territories may be acquired, and disposed

disposed of, by brutal force; and a society, like that of Britain, formed and preserved by industry, the blessings of which are the fruits of the economy of ages, is an enigma to France, which its sagacious generals are desirous of developing by the point of the sword.

This is the nature and principle of the war which is in the contemplation of the government of France, and which it veils and suspends by forms and professions of pacification.

LOCKE.

I perceive another of my fundamental truths disappearing, that taxes, prices, and all public burthens, ultimately rest on the proprietors of land.

EGERIA.

They generally reach them; but to be transferred to labour and industry, where all the burthens of society must remain.

QUESNAI.

This may enable us to explain the word MONEY, the great source of the good and evil

of modern nations. All exchanges are made, or intended to be made, on an imaginary but exact scale of the quantity and quality of labour. The manufacturer exchanges with the husbandman the produce of equal quantities and qualities of labour; or where those circumstances are not equal, the inequalities become matters of accompt, either in figures or in MONEY; which money conveys into circulation the scale or measure of the quantity and quality of labour.

RICHARD PRICE.

I can have no conception of a scale not attached to some substances, the best of which are grains of metal; for I can graduate such a scale by the weights and denominations of the metals.

QUESNAI.

Bank-paper, bills of exchange, are modes of keeping accompts, and RECORDS OF CREDIT, according to a scale. Coin are either instruments of tale, or they are pledges, where credit cannot be obtained. But no metallic coin can be an exact measure, or form a graduated scale; because the metal is merchandize.

If

If variations of value in one of the metals affect all exchanges, what must be the consequences of variations in three, calculating those variations as they relate to each other, as well as the commodities they are made to measure? They disturb all reckonings and all prices. Some persons gain, others lose, without a possibility of providing for the events. For the same commodities, and with the same pecuniary denominations, they pay more or less real value, and are relatively gainers or losers without a choice. Are these the modes to extend labour, manufactures and trade? They foster jobbers, money-dealers, and swindlers; which, like pestilential miasmæ, infect and endanger the whole community.

STEWART.

Paper is, unquestionably, the best measure of credit, and the only accurate instrument to record and transfer its denominations; but the use of it cannot become general, in any community, until the laws and morals of that community have produced a regular and established credit; and until that credit be out of the reach

of

of military and political chiefs, who may be deemed the moral descendants of CAIN.

Paper is an obligation for value, not the payment. This is sufficient in Britain alone, because there only the government is, by its construction and principles, the instrument of justice; but predatory chiefs of military governments, induce all creditors to seek, not a record or memorandum of obligation on an arbitrary scale of value in paper, but a proportional equivalent, or pledge, in metals.

These are the reasons, the injustice, and rapacity of governments obliterating all principles of honour and confidence in the people, which retain metallic instead of paper-money; and that men of property, of industry, and labour, are frequently involved in inconveniences and miseries, by assimilating the ideas of money and value.

VALUE is constituted by demand and competition for productions. Value is sometimes constituted by fancies and caprices. Faculties, demands, competitions, keep the scales of proportional value in perpetual fluctuation.

MONEY is to be clearly distinguished from

value: It is an IDEAL SCALE, like that of degrees, minutes, and seconds. When that scale is graduated by gold and silver, the portions, or the coin, are considered as PRICES as well as measures of value, because the metals have a mercantile utility. This, however, is a disadvantage and misfortune, instead of being advantageous to the community; for the metals are not sufficiently correct where nice equations are of importance; they wear out by use, they are diminished or counterfeited, and they do not, even for a day, preserve an equal mercantile utility. The ideal standard always poises, in just equilibrium, between the fluctuating proportions of value.

This ideal scale, this common measure, cannot be affixed to any material substance; because the value of all material substances is subject to depreciation, and to perpetual fluctuations with respect to each other. We should therefore always speak of money as merely a SCALE OF VALUE.

EGERIA.

Nothing can be more clear and satisfactory than

than this definition of money: and I can conceive the good effect, I may say, the purpose of Providence, in the perpetual efforts of an enlightened commerce, to exclude the metals from pecuniary circulation. That exclusion takes place, in exact proportion, as principles of real morality and good faith obtain the ascendance; and countries differing in their means of circulation, the one requiring the metals, and the other dispensing with them, are to each other like vice and virtue; every inhabitant of the one being obliged to produce, on the smallest occasion, the metallic pledge of his honesty, while the other is only under the necessity of having his transactions recorded. This is a distinction highly honourable to Great Britain, perhaps the most honourable of all her distinctions. It implies a condition of society, a state of general morality and good faith, and an equitable administration of laws respecting property, which have not only been incomprehensible to other nations, but have been misunderstood by all the speculators on her prosperity or adversity. The symptoms of her health have been called those of her disease; not only by de-

claimers misleading mobs, but by men of science calling themselves philosophers.

QUESNAI.

EGERIA justly associates the prevalence of paper-money with the advance of morals. In the commencement of the French revolution, at the moment all our moral habits were dissolved, we introduced paper-money, the strongest symbol of reciprocal confidence; and the dissolution of property followed the dissolution of manners. When I peruse the declamations of French writers, on the circulation of paper in Britain, I imagine them the productions of scribbling pawn-brokers, who have no idea of the transfer of property, but by the profitable transfer of substantial pledges.

Britain furnishes, at this time, principles and examples on finance, on the formation and the direction of pecuniary capitals, which are justly the admiration of the discerning part of mankind.

FRANCE questions their wisdom and justice, because it does not understand them. France meditates

meditates the transfer of them, by violence ; than which, there cannot be, more extravagant folly.

If the present government of France, which seems absolutely inaccessible to truly commercial ideas, were to encourage the transfer of English Capitals by Englishmen, the commercial activity and industry of France might be instantly revived—but let military chiefs invade Britain and attempt to seize these capitals ; and they will find only air-bubbles. The same capital of a million, for instance, which transferred by a capitalist, would produce on the industry of France, all the effects of a million of solid louis, without the transfer of a grain of gold—seized by Bonaparte and his brethren in arms, if such a seizure were possible, would not purchase them a sabre of honour or a loaf of bread.

France should imitate, not copy Britain. It should cultivate the principles of emulation, not of rivalry—It has only a few circumstances in common with Britain ; it possesses superior advantages, in climate, soil, and spontaneous productions ; and the effects of equal labour and

industry

industry would be superior wealth and superior power, if it abandoned the road of rivalry for that of emulation; and if, instead of prohibitions and protecting duties, it would open its markets and meet the high prices of British commodities with a proportionable advance of prices on its own productions. This measure, which the political economists of France affect to dread, as affording England the means of paying her debts, would have a different effect: it would instantly multiply the relative wealth of France, and the power of its government by taxation, with very little, perhaps with no addition to those of Britain.

STEWART.

How will you enable EGERIA to introduce such ideas into the obdurate heads of the military chiefs of France? It is true, their invasions, or as they call them, their fraternal visitations of Holland, of Switzerland, and of Italy, have had the effects of paralytic strokes; as the Roman invasions of Carthage, Sicily, and Greece, blasted those countries with lasting desolation:— still their language to all mankind, is that of predatory

predatory fraternity; and though by robbing nations of the productions of the arts, they have nearly eradicated those arts themselves; they persist in the same views respecting commerce; which may be annihilated by military violence, but never can be transferred by conquest.

EGERIA.

The difficulties of this subject, even to French students and philosophers, are great: to their present military statesmen, I believe, they are insurmountable.

They have no conceptions of the circumstances, really constituting the power and wealth of Britain. Bonaparte, when he invaded Egypt, was persuaded he should find them in India, and conquer them for the use of the Great Nation:—an enormous folly. He has since averred, they consist in its manufactures, against which he would shut up the market of France:—an advance in folly. When an invasion is the bugbear of the day, the wealth of Britain, transferrable by plunder, is estimated by the capitals of its banks, and the reservoirs of its taxes, &c.—This is the summit of folly.

In

In conversations, under various forms, with many of the Gallic sages, who suggest such extravagancies—I have exhibited to them the annexed TABLE, which I borrowed from the English Philosophical Transactions, and employed the humble assistant of a school to complete for me.

I desired those sages to apply the scale to the annual statements of the British Chancellor of the Exchequer; or to the cavils of his opponents on the amount of his expenditure—Every thing disappeared before them. Britain, they said, was not advanced in wealth; and the cavils of opposition, on the accumulated expenditure of ministers, were groundless.

The wealth of Britain, however, is advanced in her commerce; but in her internal consumption, and in all its various means, it is incalculable by any methods of which I have been informed. Perhaps more industry and ingenuity are employed to administer to the comfort and luxury of ten millions of Britons, than to those of all the other inhabitants of Europe. This is the real wealth of Britain: and this constitutes

its strength or its disease, according to circumstances, and to the conduct of its government.

If France were to take lessons from the internal state of England, and apply them to its own, it would soon become truly the GREAT NATION. If it pursue its present maxims, of monopolizing wisdom and talents to its councils and chiefs, and either intimidating or seducing all neighbouring states into political and commercial vassalage, it will weaken and destroy all the important springs of human action, and become the GREAT CURSE OF THE HUMAN RACE.

EGERIA.

TWELFTH STUDY.

———————Nunc tantum in metu audiuntur.

TACITUS.

NATIONAL DEBT.

CAIN, accompanied by warriors, hunters, &c. had stopped in his career, as he sometimes did, to amuse himself with discussions which he generally called ridiculous. CAIN, when EGERIA had concluded, thundered out, 'Sages, who have 'the art to determine wealth or riches to be 'what you please, I hope you will leave the 'lands to us, without the trouble of chasing 'you from their possession. I am astonished,

'in your enumeration of the riches of Britain,
'you have omitted her NATIONAL DEBT. If
'you can transmute this burthen into a blessing,
'and this poverty into wealth, what a mass
'(*lucus a non lucendo !*) five hundred millions
'less than non-entity!—What a treasure, five
'hundred millions less than nothing!—to be
'guarded by British valour; or to be defended
from French rapacity and depredation, under
the direction of our principles!'

EGERIA.

It is my business to invite discussion, rather that to discuss; certainly not to contend with the father of violence and depredation; the genius of military despotism, which under Assyrian, Persian, Roman, Saracen and Turkish banners, has beamed its baneful radiance over the greater part of the earth.

On the subject of the national debt of Britain, which has been the cause of wit, even in Cain; if there were not here spirits better informed, I should, though a nymph, venture to meet his frowns.

If he could affix, what he calls the burthen of

Britain, to the shoulders of France in her present disposition and state, she would soon throw the enormous and oppressive chain of her fraternity over every living being in Europe. Superstition, which now, scarcely revived, holds her cowardly form half concealed, would then stalk with giant strides, and as heretofore mark her steps with human blood: and the reason, the virtue, the liberty, for which martyrs have suffered, philosophers have written, and poets have sung, would be heard only in the echoes of dungeons.

CAIN ordered his trumpets to sound; and departed with heightened chagrin.

QUESNAI.

EGERIA, in repelling CAIN, has betrayed the inclination of her opinion, towards the advantages of a national debt.

EGERIA.

No—for in political as in natural bodies, numerous circumstances may increase their temporary force, which may terminate in the destruction of the bodies themselves.

That is precisely the general opinion of the national debt of BRITAIN. Like a dropsy, it swells in proportion to public abuses in the contraction of debts; and the whole income of the nation is gradually transferring, by ministers, without value received, from the proprietors, to placemen, pensioners and money-jobbers, called the public creditors.

This disturbs the tranquillity, eradicates the virtues, and violates the habits of the people. The *honest* country gentleman is replaced by secretaries of the treasury, admiralty, or war-offices, by brokers, bankers, lawyers and swindlers; men wholly without principle, and with habits and manners which diffuse the contagion of vice wherever such reptiles appear.

These consequences, immoral and machiavelian statesmen view with satisfaction. They promote the private interest of such statesmen: for it must increase their present power, to have the whole income of the nation in perpetual fluctuation, passing from one flock of cormorants to another; while they retain the administration

nistration of every guinea of it, at their own pleasure.

This will operate a complete revolution; and the real power of the crown and parliament, must be absorbed by a treasury differing little from a swindling-office.

STEWART.

You have stated the objections to the NATIONAL DEBT in their full force. I am glad of it; I feel the strength of my enemy before I attack him.—A mind, like that of Quesnai, will be astonished at itself, when it discovers the number of prejudices which have been introduced into it, by means of perverted but authoritative phrases.

There is no truth, in the proposition, that by the national debt, ministers become masters of the public income. This is an effect which cannot take place, for reasons which I shall assign in proper time. We see, in fact, that a debt of five hundred millions in Britain, has not transferred the estate of a single proprietor to

the public: nay, if his private folly has not interposed, his income, like that of other proprietors, has been improved.

I will not enter so far into the fractions of moral arithmetic, as to weigh the *honesty* of country gentlemen against that of clerks in offices. It might appear to be weighing satire against satire. I have no doubt, however, that an advance of credit in any country is an advance of morals; and that credit and morality operate on each other alternately as cause and effect. In every country in the world, we may observe, that the state of credit is precisely as the state of morals, to whatever origin we may ascribe that state—and it is certain, that the state of morals, in the great body of the British nation, is as much superior to that of any other, as the difference of its credit.

QUESNAI.

Your proposition sounds so much like a paradox, that I see Rousseau is pressing towards you. Let me render it complete, by adding, that the morality of Britain is owing to the national debt.

STEWART.

In the presence of such spirits as GALILEO, COPERNICUS, BACON, and NEWTON, I will not attempt to apply the invention of logarithms to moral objects; hoping they will shortly point out modes of comparing the results of political hypotheses with actual phenomena, and to extend into human life the spheres of the most useful sciences. We shall then, with the best effects, employ the common language of every country in moral and political disquisitions, and destroy that aristocracy of barren learning, which may be attached to any power and to any cause. I will, however, venture to affirm, that the morality of the English nation has been heightened, as the progress of the national debt has advanced. I do not suppose it to be the general, though, like every effect of virtue, it may become an auxiliary cause; and I appeal to the observations of this assembly on all the nations of the earth, whether the germs of more or less credit, be not the principles of honour, honesty, and fidelity, prevailing more or less, in the intercourse and transactions of the people. These

 principles

principles may have originated in religion, in the political constitution, or in the nature and administration of the laws: but they must exist to produce credit, as seed must be sown to produce vegetables and fruits.

Whether a national debt be good or evil we cannot understand, without considering its origin and nature.

It is generally confounded with the usual effects of private extravagance and folly. A spirit, whose attention I have some time fixed, (observing Richard Price,) obtained a little temporary popularity, by ringing alarms on this confusion of ideas. He declaimed to the nation as to a spendthrift which owed more than it could pay. It is wonderful some satirist did not advise him to take out a writ, and send the nation to Newgate.

RICHARD PRICE.

That might have created a laugh, but would not have averted the evil which has overtaken France, and would have confounded Britain, but for the remedy I furnished in the sinking fund.

STEWART.

Thou! say every school-boy of fourteen, who has been accustomed to amuse himself with the calculations of interest and compound-interest, and, by the disposal of his pocket-money, bequeath districts and provinces to his favourites and friends. But the discontent thou and thy successors have been indefatigable in propagating, was owing to a misapprehension or misrepresentation of the national debt.

In the present state of the earth, pecuniary provision for war must be made, either by hoarding, or by what is perhaps inaccurately called borrowing. The first is the practice of arbitrary governments, whether called monarchies or republics; the latter by states more or less free, or in the possession of free constitutions.

ROUSSEAU.

I expected you would have added by states more or less moral. What a novelty! A system of morals founded on commerce; and the acquisition of strength by an enormous debt!

STEWART.

STEWART.

I should have thought a phrascology, implying contradiction, would have recommended itself to the imagination.

EGERIA.

I hope thou wilt not be seduced into minute explanations to correct the imagination of Rousseau. It has been already satisfactorily proved, by the most respectable writers, that the mode adopted by England to provide for extraordinary expences, arises from the nature of a free government; that the national debt possesses hardly any of the inconveniences of a private debt, as it consists principally of an obligation from one part of the same nation to the other. But if it be proved an advantage, and even a political power of considerable effect, thou wilt not only enlarge the boundary of political science, but render thy country, at this time, an important service.

FRANCE, after having provoked Europe to attempt her annihilation; after having torn up her ancient institutions, and renounced most of her

her habits, has attached her fate to her armies, and to those intrigues which may be directly or indirectly influenced by armies. Those armies are not constituted by men of information and reasoning; and the same object may be presented to them, at different times, in different and contradictory points of view. At one time the wealth of England is held up as the choicest morsel for military depredation; at another, she is represented as sinking under the burthen of a national debt, which requires but a little assistance from France to effect her destruction.

The first of these false propositions has been already confuted: the last I am convinced is false, but I am also convinced, that the general opinion of mankind is unfavourable to the NATIONAL DEBT; that they consider it as originating and accumulating from profligacy, not morality; that its increase is an increase of weakness, not of strength; and that by the interference of an enemy, or by a perseverance in her funding system, Britain will perish under the NATIONAL DEBT.

STEWART.

I am not a prophet; and cannot affirm of what Britain may perish. All I would maintain is, that her credit, like that of every country, is in exact proportion to the goodness of her morals, laws, and constitution; that the national debt, (excepting the inconsiderable funds of foreigners,) has no property in common with a private debt, but is purely and simply a DEPOSIT OF GENERAL CREDIT; that its magnitude is a proof of the strength of that credit, and not of the public weakness; and that its tendency and operation is to the preservation, and not to the destruction of the country.

I have no intention to prove those who first contracted, or those who have accumulated that debt, had these ideas in their minds. With them they were the expedients of necessity; and necessity is, sometimes, without the knowledge of its immediate instruments, the parent of the most ingenious and important inventions.

It will therefore be no objection to my doctrine, that a minister may be pointed out,

adopting

adopting impolitic and destructive measures, and applying this credit to improper purposes. All the blessings of heaven, and all the inventions of man, may be misused. DEPOSITS OF CREDIT, called NATIONAL DEBTS, are among the happiest inventions of man, and the present, perhaps unrivalled, power of Britain consists principally in her national debt, or in the nature and power of her COLLECTED CREDIT.

QUESNAI.

You adroitly overlook the accumulation of taxes, the advance of prices, and the increasing misery of the lower classes of the people.

STEWART.

On the subject of taxes you adroitly drive me on the shoals of errors and prejudices.

Taxes are, or should be, the overflowing of the spring; but what minister can divide their effects justly and equitably on the people?

Taxes *add a value*, real or imaginary, to the objects taxed, for they cannot be exchanged without the addition of the tax to their value.—

Necessity

Necessity raises untaxed objects to a rate that may balance the value added by the tax.

Taxes on any commodities act on all, for by the unavoidable effort of every dealer to relieve himself they are diffused over all prices. In this manner foreigners participate in the effects of British taxes.

Every tradesman in the nation adds to the price of his commodities, not only the amount of all his taxes, but the benefit and profit he thinks due on all his advances to the public as well as to the consumer. Hence the mercantile prosperity always attending the accumulation of taxes.

The proprietors of lands advance their rents, to meet the advanced prices of the mechanic and mercantile classes.

The general conflict of private calculations and private efforts balance the temporary inconveniences and injuries first occasioned by the taxes, except where revenues consist of money, the possessors of which may have no resources against the general effort to diffuse the tax, with the profits on the advance of it, over all the active portions of the community.

QUESNAI.

QUESNAI.

And is the advance of prices a blessing? Dost thou perceive where I shall lead thee, to applaud wars and warlike ministers, the principal authors of that advance?

STEWART.

I perceive thy kindness in apprizing me of my danger.

I am aware that the ideas of prosperity, from the mere advancement of price, are not just; that the philosophical measure of value is invariable; that fluctuations of prices are those of competition, and that a permanent advance is a disease; but all history and experience prove men to be in a fluctuating, not a permanent state; and the business of the world is best transacted by the fluctuations of prices.

Wars and warlike ministers are my abhorrence, as by the misapplication of an enormous public revenue they generate political diseases, which not only influence, but become ingrained with the constitution and habits of a country.

But

But it is not with us to prevent these evils. I have only to observe, though taxes for wars act on the country like spirituous liquors on the human body, they diffuse an ardent spirit, which often becomes a spirit of industry; wealth is consequently acquired by the industrious; lands are improved to meet their demands; and superfluities are exported to procure national luxuries.

But my object is attained by proving that taxes are not menacing or fatal measures from a considerable advance of prices. The augmentation in Britain has been advantageous to all Europe, though the portion from war taxes proceeded from a pernicious cause.

Look at Ireland, or look at France, at this time imitating Ireland, in the policy of low prices. They have imagined advantages to their industry by checking the importation of British manufactures, and by selling cheap and buying dear their poverty must be increased. There is no road to wealth so direct and short, both for France and Ireland, as to meet the prices of Britain with an advance of prices, which is absolutely necessary in all the connections of commerce.

EGERIA.

It is extremely satisfactory to me, at this time, to obtain reasons for believing that the credit of Britain, and the deposit of it, called the national debt, however accumulated, is a power not a debility, and a power that will spread a shield against the views of depredation and the extinction of political institutions, which may be in the contemplation of the government of France. To the progress of the Romans, Tartars, Saracens and Turks, no such barrier was placed; the loss of a battle destroyed the resources and decided the fate of every country unfortunately invaded.

The sentiment excited in Britain by the projects of universal despotism in France is, that of the deepest abhorrence, amalgamating all distinctions religious and political, and actuating every honest mind from the Orkneys to the extremities of Ireland.

In such a situation, with such feelings, to be assured of the means of resistance and warfare, is in effect to be assured of victory. Despotism,

and

and armies the instruments of despotism, will recoil on themselves. Europe will arouse itself from its despondence, and rescue from Fraud, Violence and Oppression its independence and its liberties.

[*The Subject to be continued in the next Study.*]

EGERIA.

THIRTEENTH STUDY.

——————— Fatali omnium ignavia.

TACITUS.

NATIONAL DEBT.

PLATO.

I ADMIRE the spirit of the British apologist for the NATIONAL DEBT. His success will decide the question concerning ancient and modern liberty: it will exhibit, as an advantage, the circumstance generally deemed most disadvantageous to his country, in the present effort to prevent the completion of European disorganization, or to execute the plan of rendering

Europe tributary to one military power, the head-quarters to be at Paris.

Whether the deputies and instruments of that power be allowed the appellations of emperors, kings, princes, or citoyen-prefets, and citoyen-commissaires, their duty and occupation will be the same; they can be only foragers for the ARMIES OF LIBERTY!! who, by crushing and reducing all feeling and judgment to a SINGLE WILL, cannot fail of realizing the idea of political equality and fraternity, so long cherished by Gallic ambition.

To oppose a plan, considerably advanced, Britain is at this time single. The German emperor has not recovered the spirits of his armies or of his people. The emperor of Russia, though two millions of his best subjects are learning the art of becoming useful citizens, by occupations in the various ramifications of a commerce, carried on by British capital; this young emperor sees not all the interests, present and remote, by which Russia should be bound to resist the fixed views of the government of France, on the peculiar commerce and peculiar institutions of Britain.

The

The king of Prussia rests on his arms, taking with each hand whatever occurs for the enlargement of his dominions; not suspecting that Britain alone stands in the defile, which, once passed by France, would leave her no obstruction in disinheriting the potentates of Europe of all their real dominion and power.

ARISTOTLE.

Of all the calamities that can befall the earth, it is the greatest, to be subjected to ONE WILL, or to the WILL OF ONE MAN; and yet that has been the object of every successful conqueror, from my pupil Alexander, to the fortunate adventurers of the present period.

That millions, each having a will, should be guided by the will of one, is as absurd and impracticable, as it would be that all men should see with one eye; it militates against the laws of Nature in forming societies, to each of which appertains a will; and against those by which the collective will of nations may be made their law.

The mania with which the French revolution infested Europe, having referred all questions,

moral, intellectual, and metaphysical, to the decision of arms, Fortune hath declared for France against the greater portion of it: and the councils of Paris, like those of Macedon, of Rome, of Samarcand, of Constantinople, &c. draw exactly the same conclusions, that vanquished societies lose all their social properties, retaining only their names; and that military power implies all the qualifications, and all the rights of legislation and government.

Though these principles would be execrated in TARTARUS by all the prefects and pro-consuls of Satan, they are correctly those of human conquerors; they are those which actuate the ambition of France, at this time, against Britain; and they will produce a series of bloody, destructive, and calamitous events, if FRANCE ITSELF find not in the reflection and knowlege of its numerous philosophers and politicians, a check and controul on the folly of its councils. It is alleged, France, in its dreadful revolution, has suffered from the power of Britain. The answer is, that all Europe was afflicted by a temporary insanity, the machinations and deeds of which should be buried in eternal oblivion.

The

The present government of France, founds its pretensions on the merit of having suspended or arrested that insanity; but on what pretence does it suspend and arrest the most important operations of the human mind? France commenced her revolution on the model of Britain, which she attempted extravagantly to excel; and, in the extravagant attempt, lost all her own institutions. In the extremity of her rage and disappointment, she "set fire to the four corners of the world*," and, by long experience, she acquired a superiority in the tactics of destruction, and in the science of shedding human blood. Wherever her armies appear, the independence, the rights, the industry, and the happiness of nations sink into the dust. One nation remains, the model on which her philosophy first conceived its ideas of political excellence; but whose institutions are now the severest stigmas on her loss of liberty.

The narrow sea is the modern RUBICON. If her armies could pass it successfully, they would blot out of the view of their country, THE TRIAL BY JURY, the law of HABEAS CORPUS, the

* The favourite phrase of Brissot.

the PERFECT SECURITY OF PERSON and PROPERTY, and particularly THE BEAUTIFUL SYSTEM OF CREDIT, which Stewart has so ably delineated; and which, though of suspicious origin, and suspicious growth, is among the happiest inventions of modern times: the chains of despotism would then be riveted on France herself; she might be amused with canals and roads, under pretences of commerce, but with military views: her ambassadors, envoys, messengers, prefects, commissaries, &c. &c. would be all soldiers; every thing useful to society would stagnate at its present level, and all Europe would sink into apathy, ignorance, and barbarism.

This is a direful lesson for the most intelligent and enlightened statesmen; and I feel for those who may be commissioned to explain it.

STEWART.

I have not undertaken to explain all the parts of such a lesson. My principal object is, to shew that the hostility of France to the commerce and credit of Britain, is hostility to itself.—Let any of the spirits in this assembly view

view the state of the countries in question, Britain greatly inferior to France in all natural advantages, in those of soil, climate, productions, and situation; how greatly superior, in every thing that contributes to the convenience and comfort of life! FRANCE, I speak not of individuals, but of the general condition of the people, is but little elevated above barbarism; the common population, in a land flowing with milk and honey, the atmosphere of which is impregnated with the perfumes of the choicest vegetation—are squalid, emaciated, filthy; themselves the food of the vilest vermin.—What is to be thought of a government that can pursue the shadows of foreign conquests and foreign influence, while an immense internal population, the most docile and the best tempered in the world, continue in this deplorable condition! But the fame of foreign glory, and the prevalence of internal misery, are the supports of military despotism*!

If

* Bonaparte, at a late review, asked a soldier how he liked his soup—'Much better than at home,'—replied the poor fellow. Domestic misery is the permanent recruiting officer for implicit armies. The guillotine recruited for Robespierre.

If the government of France could study the real prosperity and happiness of the country, it would imitate, instead of making war on the institutions of Britain, avoiding the errors and inconveniences which attended their origin; among which institutions, those of commerce and credit hold most important ranks.

Every branch of the industry and trade of France might be promoted without the inconveniences of those monopolies, which were necessary to the early commercial institutions of Britain; and the consequences, in such a country, would be rapid and astonishing.

QUESNAI.

I wonder not the nation is occasionally maddened, at the obstructions to such felicity, occasioned by its own government.

The youth who are now marching by thousands, in all directions, to fraternize and enslave foreign nations, if they were employed on the soil, in the trade and commerce of France, —would render it a paradise. I cannot help, even here, viewing with regret, the charming provinces, bordering on the Mediterranean, almost

most abandoned to their own luxuriance; while Britain offers, on its comparatively barren shores, such retreats as Margate, Brighton, Southampton, Weymouth, &c.

EGERIA.

These lamentations are vain! We must allow time. The countries you consider, were once the demesnes of beasts of prey. Those beasts are nearly extirpated. TIME AND REAL PHILOSOPHY WILL EXTIRPATE MILITARY DESPOTS. It is our business to accelerate the event, by the increase and diffusion of knowlege and virtue.

STEWART.

When I apologize for the NATIONAL DEBT, and hint at the public advantages of having the whole property of the country in constant circulation; when I insist on the advanced state of morals, and I may add of civil liberty*, which

* The elective franchise has been gradually and prodigiously extended since the qualification of an elector was fixed (temp. Henry VI.) at forty shillings a year; forty shillings then, being equal to 250 * in 1800. That has been occasioned by all the

* Vide table annexed to No. XI.

which always accompanies an advanced state of credit, I do not mean to render myself answerable for all the measures that have produced those effects.

It is possible that a national LAND BANK might have had such effects, with fewer inconveniences : but I have no business with mere possibilities.

We know the utility of a BANK OF DEPOSIT, from the practice of Holland.—But Britain alone has possessed the faculty, from the improved state of her political constitution, her laws, and her morals, to transmute EVIL into GOOD. I do not justify any minister, in the misapplication of public money in wars. I am not unapprised of those chasms in the provinces of industry, occasioned by wanton ignorance, by which vast masses of labour have been suspended, and by that suspension manufactures have been ruined, landlords impoverished, and thousands have died of hunger. I am not insensible to the inconveniences of a vicious species of monied

the causes which have advanced the denomination of prices, and depreciated the denomination of money : viz. credit, the national debt, balances of trade, and foreign remittances.

monied interest, generated by the numerous, sometimes inevitable errors which take place in the pecuniary intercourse of the government and the people. This interest emerges from the dust of compting-houses and offices, and often absorbs an injurious proportion of those effects of labour and industry, which should have directly promoted the public prosperity.—I love not those corporations, privileges, and premiums, which are indirect taxes on productive labour, and hostile to that spirit of real liberty, that noble principle of life which has distinguished Britain from other countries: but I take the general sum of the real effects of wisdom and folly, virtue and vice; and I find it greatly in favour of Britain, of her institutions, habits, and proceedings, political, moral and commercial. I find, in a case, the most liable to exceptions, that of Ireland; as her debts accumulated, her credit and affluence have advanced. The interest of forty millions is so much addition to her circulation, and greatly enhances her credit and her prosperity.

QUESNAI.

QUESNAI.

I must remind you, that credit is a confidence on a solid foundation; an opinion of the fairest probabilities. It is not wealth, though it produce its effects: It is the shadow of a valuable substance; it is the vapor of a fruitful soil; but it is not the substance or the soil. It is also to be counterfeited; a meteor that dazzles and misleads. This is the case with all confidence on false extravagant ideas.

STEWART.

It is not the case in Britain. The capital of her enormous debt, deducting mere subsidies, though borrowed for wars, (purposes not in harmony with my mind,) I can trace directly or indirectly, into an increased and intelligent population, proportioned to an increased annual produce, or to increased capitals, employed on lands, mines, manufactures, commerce, and sciences.

The credit of BRITAIN is therefore a confidence on a solid foundation; but the peculiar advantage

advantage of that credit seems to me to arise from the very circumstance which is alleged as the omen of ruin; that it is founded on a NATIONAL DEBT. The capital of a Land-bank could not be enlarged, even if the whole territory were the pledge, without depreciating its paper. That has been fully demonstrated in America and in France; for no *despotic*, and no *revolutionary* government, can possess that species of *credit*, which will admit of a national debt to be augmented indefinitely, without the obligation of actual payment. Despots, whether stationary or revolutionary, must repay, or plunder, or become bankrupt: the credit of a bank of deposit is limited to the value of the deposit; but that of a national debt, where the capital cannot be demanded, and the interest can be paid, HAS NO KNOWN LIMITS.

QUESNAI.

Surely it must be limited by the ability to pay the interest.

STEWART.

Those limits are unknown to me. The financiers of Britain, without an exception in my knowlege,

knowlege, have enhanced the public debts, with the sentiments and apologies of public offenders. That, in my opinion, has been owing to an ignorance of its nature and political effects. The most daring of them, has discovered frequent signs of fear, from the difficulty of finding out new taxes, and from an apprehension of the effects of taxes, which he affected to deny, on the prices of commodities. He therefore took the advice of some empiric, and adopted the income-tax, which instantly added to those prices.

As if Providence had meant to open his eyes, a scarcity took place, which added to prices the full effect of a loan, perhaps, of several hundred millions.

Let any reflecting and judicious mind recollect the condition of Britain, how little affected by those events; and let him determine, if he can, the extent of her power in real and important emergencies, by the wise direction and management of her faculty of contracting and sustaining a national debt.

America and France, by the emission of paper beyond their first capitals, destroyed the paper itself; not because the securities were doubtful,

for they were unexceptionable, but because, from their nature, the capitals were incapable of enlargement. But BRITAIN, accumulating a debt, which she is not obliged to pay, increases her power, directly and indirectly, by the application of the money to the immediate objects of Government, and by the general effects of that application on the labour and industry of the country.

QUESNAI.

But taxes! taxes! and prices!

STEWART.

Are, in my opinion, bugbears!—I do not say they should be wantonly and lavishly incurred. No part of a minister's duty requires more consideration and prudence than the imposition of taxes; but, when real dangers menace the nation, a minister who does not see the mighty resource of the national credit in the power of sustaining a national debt, and who does not make the enemy sensible of it, is not fit to stand the shock that probably awaits the country. I do not affirm, that ministers may not have accumulated

mulated the public debt, often without consideration or judgment. I do not affirm, that heavy taxes and high prices have not their inconveniences, though these inconveniences are greatly reduced, when almost every man has either shaken off or profited by his share. But I do affirm, that the power which Britain now possesses of DOUBLING HER NATIONAL DEBT, to meet a proportionable danger, by submitting to a temporary advance of prices, which advance every man throws from him until it can scarcely be found any where, and which she has cheerfully borne, under the apprehensions of scarcity and want; is a resource which has been hitherto unknown in the history of the world; which may possibly, like many other blessings, have originated in what is called evil, but which cannot be improved and directed to all its great ends without wisdom and integrity in her ministers.

EGERIA.

You have afforded me the greatest consolation. —I am not free from doubts on taxes and prices, —but I exult in a great and general truth, which may

may preserve the remnants of real liberty in the present wreck of nations. A horrible military despotism is chasing from the continent all resisting principles and virtues. In Britain, the weight of the national debt is hailed, by this despotism, as its best friend. —IT IS ITS MORTAL FOE; for I can have no doubt that, the British Government explaining the nature of its proceedings, Britain would never hesitate between the inconveniences of the highest prices she has ever known, and the consequences of French banditti desolating her smiling plains, and forcing her high-spirited children to crouch at the will and caprice of some military and predatory adventurer.

RICHARD PRICE.

There can be no necessity of a SINKING FUND to pay off this debt, if its advantages be so numerous?

EGERIA.

That is another question, which will lead us into the province of reformers; a class of mingled

and contradictory characters; and I am glad to see, not only the most celebrated, but also the most rational of them, attending to the discussions in this assembly.

I shall have no objection to draw some of them into our circle, by considering the good and evil of a SINKING FUND.

EGERIA.

FOURTEENTH STUDY.

SINKING FUNDS; FOR THE PAYMENT OF NATIONAL DEBTS.

——— Quasi impetus antiqui, et bona æmulatione.

TACITUS.

EGERIA.

No circumstance, in the conversations held here, has made so deep an impression on me, as the faculty, in a political constitution happily formed, to produce good out of evil; for I apprehend, the NATIONAL DEBT of Britain has not been contracted with the views of national advantage, which the British advocate has stated as its actual effects.

I admire his ideas on the subject, as new, highly probable, and extremely useful.

He has, however, touched on taxes and prices too lightly. Taxes, by raising prices, produce numerous inconveniencies and evils, which he only generally acknowledged.

STEWART.

I do not deny the general truth; but it is not my business to dwell on it. They produce those inconveniencies, however, until, and not after prices are generally raised.

Prices rose, through Europe, ten per cent. from 1754 to 1770; because the prices of the commodities exported by Britain were raised by Taxes. But all Europe declared itself enriched by it.

It is impossible to preserve the commercial intercourse of nations, if prices do not advance reciprocally; and if nations moderately taxed, obliged by their intercourse to pay portions of the taxes of those which are highly taxed, are not permitted to enrich themselves by raising the prices of their own commodities.

The

The present government of France*, little versed in any thing but war, stumbles at this supposed difficulty; and obstinately declines a treaty, by which the nation would be enriched; because, to be enriched, it must pay portions of the British taxes.

Governments are generally the most discreet, who do the least in matters of trade; except in their immediate duties of making roads, bridges, and canals, and favouring the general liberty of communication: But if the government of France must, as it seems it must, interfere in every thing, and it cannot see the PUBLIC INTEREST, in paying a portion of British taxes, by being furnished with a good reason to advance the prices of all its own commodities; it is wonderful it does not see its PRIVATE INTEREST, in the immediate imposition of taxes, to meet the prices of British commodities.

It prefers, however, the formation of a system of contraband trade of enormous magnitude, by which twenty per cent. is added to the prices of those manufactures which are

* 1803.

thought to be already rendered too dear by taxes.

But to return to the subject before us—I allow that the inconveniencies of taxes are numerous, until every man has found out the method of paying them without expence.

It is not in my province to suggest remedies for these evils: some of them are occasioned by an injudicious mode of imposing the tax; which should generally be accompanied by regulations, that may prevent trading companies, monopolizing manufacturers, and those swarms of locusts called retailers, from drawing more than their just re-imbursements from proportional profits on the sale of goods. These persons, in many cases, are become, in Britain, the farmers-general, or collectors of taxes, with enormous profits; and all taxes, to the astonishment of the unwary, are borne, not only without murmur, but with chearfulness and alacrity. Great companies, great manufacturers, and retail-dealers, have been so far from paying any taxes, during the whole of the late war, that they have been allowed to re-imburse them,

with

with unlimited profits, in every instance, by the advance of prices.

But I am not a REFORMER; because I perceive, though almost every man, the idle and disappointed especially, is wishing to assume the character, how few, how very few, possess the abilities, the knowlege, and the virtues to sustain it—I could point out the errors of this or that Minister. Nothing so easy, even to a blockhead who would have committed greater in his place. Ministers are instruments inadequate to the good or evil generally attributed to them; and we cannot calculate, from the apparent success of one Minister, the certain success of another. The principles and habits of communities are the predisposing causes of all important political reforms—As in science, so in policy, the whole society collects the materials, and the favourite of Fame owes his glory to the good fortune of having first marked the happy combinations which form the event.

TURGOT.

You decline, therefore, the first step in the

road of reformation in Britain, the payment of the NATIONAL DEBT.

STEWART.

I hesitate only, as I do in the consideration of all unknown and unexperienced measures.

I can dream visions of perfection, as plausible and as pleasing as yours; and I may entertain my wishes respecting them: but I would not trust the fate of a village wholly to their direction.

TURGOT.

You have said *, that a permanent advance of prices is a disease. I should on that account infer, that a permanent low price, viz. a price unincumbered with taxes, would be the best symptom of health—and I should also infer your opinion to be for the removal of taxes, by the discharge of national debts.

STEWART.

You shall not draw me into the provinces of theories and hypotheses—I could imagine as plausibly

* Vide Study XIII.

plausibly as you or your pupil Condorcet, a state where riches consist wholly in the masses of national labour and industry, collected on equitable and virtuous principles, and exactly and perpetually balanced by the conscientious sagacity of private interests; where credit is fixed on a certain basis; and where the circulating medium is formed on an unalterable scale, and accurately represents philosophical money.—But of what avail would such reveries be to the purposes of EGERIA, who would find herself, on her first entrance on earth, in a region of perpetual fluctuations; obstructed and confounded, sometimes by the maxims of privy-councils, sometimes by that chaos of contradictory regulations, to which the governments of all nations have contributed, and which are called THE LAWS OF TRADE; by which one absurdity has extorted another, until a system has been formed, destructive of the general purposes they were intended to serve.—Would you advise her to act in this case, as the genius of your political revolution acted?

TURGOT.

If that question is to be the shield of all abuses, we may close our discussions.

STEWART.

I do not mean it in that sense. I firmly believe that the timely correction of errors and abuses, is the best preservative against Revolutions—but I know no province of political science so abstruse, and abounding with such difficulties, as that of NATIONAL CORRECTION. Every man, as I have already said, is a reformer; every man is also a physician:—but what a contrast would be the real lists of those which are benefited, and those which die of the remedies?

EGERIA.

If I obtain your advice on the subject under consideration, I shall probably be inclined to apply it.

Though you have attributed important uses to that display of national credit in Britain, called the National Debt; you have hinted at inconveniencies which must accumulate with its

its increase, and which can be diminished only by its diminution. It seems therefore extraordinary that you discover a reluctance in ascertaining the benefits of a SINKING FUND.

STEWART.

I perceive I must repeat, that I do not comprehend the reasons of the apparent deviations from order, or from those rules you call principles, in the moral or in the natural world.

I am sensible that riches and prices, the produce of privileges and taxes, must be different in their effect from those accumulated and fixed by the natural equilibrium of all interests, by activity and industry fairly exerted, and by the preservation of prices in due proportions to real value. If all exchanges could be made on just measures, and labour, industry, and population were augmented in proportions perfectly equitable, riches would be unmingled blessings, and the prices of commodities would suffer little, perhaps no variations. But this is an imaginary state, of the incidents of which I have no experience.

As the affairs of nations are at this time managed, the practical theory of prices furnishes

nishes the most abstruse problems of political economy.

We know, that increased prices propagated through Europe, have created a general interest to produce and to consume exchangeable commodities.

High prices, when moderate, are the stimuli which promote health.

TURGOT.

And when immoderate?

STEWART.

They produce disease; and I know no bodies, physical or political, which are not subject to disease.

TURGOT.

But you can reform the governments that produce disease.

STEWART.

In the present case, I know no better expedient than the advance of prices, to guard the labour and industry of the people against the arbitrary operations of governments, on the numerary value of money.

When demand and improved credit, when the

the balances of trade, and the direct or indirect contributions of colonies raise prices, the effect takes place equitably, if no extraneous power interfere; but it necessarily takes place. The inconveniencies also are in time divided equitably, or if turned, as they sometimes may be turned, into advantages, those advantages may also be equitably and satisfactorily adjusted.

TURGOT.

Would you maintain this evil is to have no check or limitation?—Are those men who subsist by the mischievous expences of governments, as vermin are fed by putrefaction, to burden and crush all the nations of the earth? These expences, including the armies which shelter them, constitute five sixths of the enormous demands on public industry.

Even in France, on the death of Louis XIV. the Duc D'Orleans appointed a commission called THE VISA, to enquire into the claims of the creditors of the nation; the foundations of pensions, annuities, and even fortunes accumulated directly or indirectly from public contributions.

STEWART.

STEWART.

I have nothing to offer, at this time, on partial reforms—the subject before me, is the operation of sinking funds, in paying national debts, removing taxes, and lowering prices. — Taxes which have circulated some time through certain channels, cannot be stopped without some of the inconveniencies of revolutions.

The enormous evils, as I will allow them to be, of armies, navies, arsenals, dock-yards, &c. like former establishments of military and religious orders; support numerous classes of industry, which, without participating in what may be called their guilt, must sustain the misery of their suppression: for the authors of the abuses and evils they occasion, like the authors of all national evils, contrive to retire from the storms they have raised. But the fate of those classes, which were induced to look up to them for the rewards of merit, or the recompence of ingenious industry, is afflicting to humanity, even when wisdom requires the correction of the evil which furnished the recompence. The event called THE REFORMATION in Britain removed enormous national oppressions; but

but what scenes of private misery and private compassion did it open to individuals?

TURGOT.

Would you pretend, the application of enormous sums in the vague pretences of the war on the French Revolution, has not created a political disease, which has considerably depraved the English Constitution?

STEWART.

I do not clearly understand the question: But let any thing that can be wished from the answer be granted, peace is restored*; what is called the vicious circulation, by war, is diminished; and money consolidates and stagnates. Can even your sanguine imagination presume, that a circulation could be substituted, equal to all the present taxes of Britain, expended, perhaps, principally in the occupations of destruction? The real price of work is generally forced below that of a comfortable subsistence; and the diminution of taxes could hardly ever be effected without the extinction of some portion of industry.

TURGOT.

* Written before the war was determined upon in 1803.

TURGOT.

I thought the opinion of Queen Elizabeth, a maxim of political economy in England, 'The 'treasures of a Prince are never so well placed 'as in the pockets of his subjects.'

STEWART.

The truth of such a maxim does not affect the present question. The accumulations of surplus wealth, which take the denomination of National Debt, and whose interest raises prices by creating taxes, could not be hoarded by individuals without extinguishing half the industry of Britain. And if heavy taxes, when imposed, were suddenly taken off, the large sums circulated by them would disappear. It is demand for exchange by circulation that CREATES money. Taxes raise prices, and require additional portions or denominations of money as the means of payments. When the taxes cease, the additional money, instead of being distributed among those who paid them, will cease to exist and act as money.

The cessation of taxes may therefore, if not counteracted by prudent provisions, very injuriously

riously interrupt the industry and employment of the people.

RICHARD PRICE.

The subject has always been differently understood in Britain; and even a Bishop* has lately grasped at popularity, by proposing that the National Debt should be at once extinguished by every man's allotment of an equitable portion of his property.

STEWART.

The Bishop might have found more useful occupation, by a residence in his diocese, than by enlisting among those political theorists and projectors who never consider consequences.

If five hundred millions were at once thrown into a circulation, already full from the interest alone, where are the faculties either of labour, industry, or commerce which could absorb them? Such a measure would produce a revolution of greater violence, and of more calamitous consequences than any suggested by the wild imagination of Wakefield. Wakefield was punished for his extravagancies.—I do not wish

* Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff.

wish the punishment of the Bishop.—I have no objection to his promotion, except that it should be the consequence of this project, as the reward would befal ignorance.

Were all the landlords of Britain to offer their lands for sale, they would first sink their value and then find no market; circulation would be immediately glutted, and interest would fall to nothing.

But I will not proceed among these direful consequences.

TURGOT.

Commodities may produce as much in effect by their exchange, though they may sink in denomination.

STEWART.

So it may appear in theory; but the experience of Spain, Portugal, and other countries where great and sudden changes took place in the denominations of money, warrant no such conclusions.

If the pound sterling should advance five per cent. in value by withdrawing taxes, as it has sunk by laying them on, who shall guard either an individual or the public from being

obliged to pay a just and fair annuity or salary in the same number or denomination? And would not this be discharging contracts, according to language, and not according to things?

The removal of the public debt cannot be of any considerable benefit to the people at large; when they have fully acquired the habit of uniting ideas of low value to high denominations of money. Debtors and purchasers will profit by deductions; but when the action of the SINKING FUND is generally felt, and taxes are removed; unless the government instruct the people, *by making fair conversions in the receipt of taxes;* unless commodities be obliged to follow the proportions of apparent depreciation, by new regulations of assize, and by occasionally distributing tables of prices, and of all the consequences of the variations of coins; they must become the prey of jobbers in all the articles of alienation.

TURGOT.

I fear you have hinted at provisions which will never be made.

Laws on money, are made by lawyers, who are generally place-men, pensioners, or persons having some permanent contracts against the people.

These contracts—to which there is actually but one party, are made in times of agitation, of war, or of some supposed distress, when money is depreciated; and they are discharged in peace, perhaps in perpetuity, by the same denominations of money, but greatly increased in value.

STEWART.

In this, as in every discussion, I have considered all human measures as mingled good and evil.

The general error of political philosophers has been to treat of them as unmingled. The anticipation of revenues, and the contraction of debts, they have pronounced to be the infliction of evil; and the removal of that evil in any manner, or by any means, an unquestionable and most desireable benefit.

Facts, which always represent the condition of humanity as a mingled state, never separate good and evil; and in the administration of remedies

medies either physical or moral, a sudden cure is often a sudden death.

TURGOT.

Then you admit, a removal of the national debt would be a cure.

STEWART.

I will, when you prove that the apparent removal of any disorder restores the body to perfect health, or rather to the faculty of preserving it: for this seems to be the object of nature, in the introduction of evil; as no good seems to be produced spontaneously; all the virtues and all the blessings of life, being guarded by the admonitions and menaces of evils.

I therefore think, in the present state of human society and human knowlege, that the sudden removal of the National Debt of England, would be the annihilation of its system of credit and circulation.

I do not, however, object to the operations of its SINKING FUND. They will be rendered sufficiently gentle and gradual by the recurrence

of wars; and those opposite causes will produce that state of fluctuation best suited to the spirit of enterprize, which, assuming all possible forms, is the source of that complicated and wonderful industry which actuates the British nation.

France, which sees the effects of that industry without understanding its causes, has frequently proceeded to hostilities on the mere prosperity of Britain: and at this moment*, the question which produces war, involves all the valuable institutions of Britain; its credit, its commerce, and many of those privileges, principles and laws, which are the guardians of its internal liberties.

EGERIA.

I have no objection to your explanations, or to those inferences which may induce Britons at this time to rally around their financial, moral and civil institutions. But I object to the implication of France in the present measures of its

* War was in effect declared at the time of writing this paragraph.

its government, which is revolutionary in a more decided and formidable sense than ever†.

A torpor has succeeded the violent convulsions of a long and calamitous revolution, which has left France almost incapable of any thing like a general will, and absolutely without the power of exerting it.

A species of timid and diseased irritability, shews occasionally some symptoms of the possible revival of that general and noble feeling, which first furnished philosophic statesmen with the idea of a possible system of political liberty. They failed! what wonder that their edifice fell! when, of men, the noblest works of God, fifty out of a hundred die before the tenth year, and six only live to sixty!! The friends and adherents of these statesmen, the Royalists, and the connections of Royalists in all degrees, form a great majority against the present military government.

If

† "Now commences the æra of Revolutions."—Bonaparte, to the Council, on assuming the consulate.

Mr. Canning therefore, in singing the praises of Mr. Pitt, for having *weathered a storm* which has not *yet* blown on the British Coast, was guilty of something like an Hibernian Bull—Mr. Canning is not *yet* a profound politician, or an accurate political grammarian, whatever he may be as an orator or a poet.

If this majority could be assimilated; if it could agree to wave petty differences, and to adopt, *bona fide*, a constitution similar to that of Britain; the present government would soon be taught, that "a part is not greater than the whole." But the government itself, in the present, as in every revolutionary modification, has been created by the obstinate divisions of the people of France; and, infatuated by ambition, it is rapidly proceeding to render Europe a vast den, where a general military despotism would degrade all political and civil powers into tributary vassals, and hold the people to perpetual toil, in miserable and hopeless woe.

The nations immediately surrounding France are intimidated at the approach of scientific and disciplined fiends, who have ridden the revolutionary blast, and who are ever accompanied with rapine, famine, disease and death.

The semi-barbarians who have excited, and who now direct this predatory fury, have had it long in contemplation to lay in ashes the focus of that real knowlege, which they dread as their most dangerous enemy; and, in swearing the

the destruction of Britain, I doubt not they have sworn their own.

Time, and its own absurdities, were thought to be the proper and fatal enemies to the present government of France; but the councils of Britain have resolved otherwise, and they have determined to assail that enormous mass of power, cemented by floods of human blood, on which this monster stands.

It is hoped, the same wisdom which is apparent in the British institutions, will inspire British councils, and direct the movements of British fortitude and British courage—and that I shall soon return for the discussion of other principles of amendment and reform, which are thought to affect the character and prosperity of nations, in a greater degree than measures of finance.

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EGERIA.

FIFTEENTH STUDY.

CONSULAR LESSONS.

——— nihil compositum miraculi causa, verum audita scriptaque scnioribus, tradam.

TAC.

ON the return of EGERIA, who had only glanced into those councils in Europe preparatory to a new series of incidents and events, she found the spirits she had quitted contemplating the processes of correction on despots, tyrants, and military chiefs, who were not incorrigibly depraved. The spirit of ALEXANDER was chained to a rock, called the Rock of

Patience, and subjected to all imaginable humiliations of pride. CÆSAR was the slave of CATO. FREDERIC sometimes a drilling corporal, sometimes a preaching friar, accompanied by VOLTAIRE as a clerk. CHARLES V. and PHILIP II. followed by execrating myriads of Protestants, led by LUTHER and CALVIN; and LOUIS XIV. a waiter for the accommodation and service of all the Huguenots, who passed into the nether world. When EGERIA appeared, Bajazet and Kouli-Khan, who were yoked to the machinery of a perpetual engine, cried out, Is the consul coming? He will, surely, be appointed to relieve us.

FREDERIC.

He seems to have disgusted EGERIA with projects of reform; which have always terminated in the elevation and despotism of some adventurer.

EGERIA.

Of all the forms which despotism has hitherto assumed, that of the French consulate is the most

most insulting and humiliating to the people, and the most *alarming* to all neighbouring powers.

(The Fury, employed on ROBESPIERRE, suspended her operations, and the monster felt a moment's consolation, when EGERIA pronounced the general sentiment of Europe, as well as of France, whenever Robespierre and Bonaparte are compared, *Ille crucem pretium sceleris tulit, hic diadema.*)

EGERIA.

To warriors and despots I may appear to advance a paradox when I say, "Of the two evils, the anarchy was the least."

The incidents of anarchy are, doubtless, horrible and disgusting, but they are few; the sufferings they inflict are short; and they soon rouze a resistance which terminates the evil; but a military despotism, amalgamated with that refinement of human villany called Machiavelian policy, throws over the whole people a despondence, for which there may be no remedy but in a second revolution.

FREDERIC.

Egeria will not, surely, aver that France, in exchanging Jacobinism for Despotism, is not benefited.

EGERIA.

I have blushed for France, when she stood appalled at the name of a feeble and cowardly miscreant, such as Robespierre: but she was disorganised. The general prevalence of ferocity over talents; the execution of the King; the devoted death of Charlotte Corday; the murther of the twenty-two deputies; the sacrifice of the immortal wife of Roland; the massacre of the Queen and of the amiable Elizabeth; and the reciprocal butcheries of the monsters who had been instigated to those atrocities; were deemed incidents which diffused terror over Europe. But these, however dreadful or unjustifiable, were events of short duration, and their effects inconsiderable, compared with those of a cool and permanent system of fraud and cruelty, now constituting the government

of

of France: a government wholly supported by the terror of an army, by spies, and suborned evidence; by imprisonments at pleasure; by the command of judges; and by discretionary and disproportionate punishments. Such a government inflicts more real wretchedness and misery in one day, and repeats that infliction daily, than popular insurrections in an age. I do not plead for insurrection, but if I were obliged to submit to despotism, I should prefer that of Robespierre to that of Bonaparte: the one affording hope, the other being hopeless.

CÆSAR.

When Brutus had stabbed me, Cassius exclaimed, "Nequissimum occisum esse." "We have slain the worst of men." The Romans were soon convinced of the mistake.

EGERIA.

You were not allowed time to prevent that mistake. Your own declaration is recorded by Sallust, that the most pernicious measures are preceded by the most laudable.

BACON.

BACON.

We shall be more improved by the narrative of EGERIA, than by her confutations of the sophistry of Cæsar.

EGERIA.

To spirits possessing your knowledge, it will not seem extraordinary, that a being, of so much intrinsic insignificance; of private qualities so offensive; and of talents so limited; should not only be master of France, but affect to command Europe, and the general destiny of the human race.

The principle and the direction of a public force is so little understood, that I shall not wonder it should be accidentally seized by an APE or a MONKEY; and employed by caprices similar to those which now embarrass and endanger all Europe.

Every thing is so entangled in the mazes of petty artifices, that by throwing myself into the system of Espionage which pervades France, I found all real information was lost, even to the

the employer, by spies on spies, and suspicions multiplying suspicions.

The country is divided into twenty-four prefectures; and all the prefects, like the major-generals of Cromwell, are subordinate despots; except in specified circumstances affecting the government, or rather the subjugation, of the whole country, which is subjected implicitly to the will of the Consul; and that country, lately vaunting its *conquest* of liberty, is considered and treated as the nursery and foraging district of a vast army, which, after reducing it to slavery, may wrest the reins of power out of the feeble hand that holds them.

CÆSAR.

Omnia deinde arbitrio militum acta.

EGERIA.

Perceiving every thing in France that might be called a public measure wholly out of the reach and influence of the public, and determined wholly by the caprice of an individual, a stranger to its ancient constitution, habits,

and

and manners, I had to surmount the numerous difficulties of approaching his person; difficulties which have surrounded all despots, while they have preserved any recollection of the means by which they have acquired their power.

ALEXANDER.

A beautiful nymph could never fail,

EGERIA.

The immortal purity of a nymph might have hesitated at thy brutal passions, though inviolable by them; but having nothing to apprehend from the poor little being in question, I had nothing also to hope.

The author, or rather authoress, of his elevation and power, is a botanist; and he urges the study, when any chances of discovering poisons, and the antidotes of poisons, are intimated. Behold me therefore engaged as an Italian boy, an adept in the jargon of modern botany, and completely learned in poisonous antidotes*.

If

* The directing gardener is an Englishman, but a prisoner within certain bounds.

If I relate private anecdotes, it will not be for the purposes of private scandal: the actions I shall refer to are *political causes*, and their morality or immorality are, in that respect, of little or no account.

It is a *tremendous lesson* to those who seek political remedies in the dissolution of political bodies, that their fragments are generally taken up by the most daring and unprincipled adventurers, and they are modelled and brought into action to gratify the vilest passions of those adventurers.

I shall only touch on the general points of the French revolution, in order to render the present narrative intelligible and useful. I have seen numerous histories of that extraordinary event; but they are histories of persons and parties, artfully coloured and disguised for particular purposes: I have seen no history of its principles.

Since the discovery of the art of printing, particularly since the protestant reformation, forms and principles of government have been subjects

subjects of assiduous and interesting, though sometimes licentious and indecent criticism.

At the conclusion of the American war, which was determined more by letters than by arms, the question seemed to be decided, that communities, to be free and happy, must be governed by the GENERAL WILL of each community, and not by the partial views and interests of privileged individuals, classes or factions.

From the banks of the Ohio to those of the Neva, nothing was heard or spoken of but the GENERAL WILL of nations and states.

Its effects in the moral, like those of the philosopher's stone in the medical world, were described in enchanting language, and without ascertaining its nature and practicability, all the world was in extasy for the GENERAL WILL.

LOCKE.

Egeria is severe and satirical, even in the presence of Montesquieu.

EGERIA.

EGERIA.

I must not be interrupted at this time; the merits, and particularly the definitions of Montesquieu, will be examined in future discussions; I desire it may then be recollected that I have asserted, no writer, no statesman, no orator, has defined the phrase, PUBLIC WILL, or rendered the definition a practical principle: and that the French revolution became a source of calamity to France and to Europe, because its professed principle was not understood, and that the Public Will never appeared, but as an ignis fatuus, misleading fanaticism into errors and crimes.

TURGOT.

Did not the CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY act from the Public Will?

EGERIA.

No; because at the time there was no mode of forming or expressing it.

The Cahiers, from the several provinces of France,

France, represented grievances, and expressed a desire they might be referred to the General States.

Those states, when assembled, *transformed themselves* into a constituent assembly of a nature then pronounced popular, and *nominally* assumed the power of the state.

The *real power* at the time might have been in La Fayette, if he had possessed the spirit and the atrocity to seize it.

It was seized by the jacobin leaders, and the *pretended public will* was expressed by the will of Brissot; by that of Danton; by that of Robespierre; by that of Barras; and by that of Bonaparte.

I shall not, at this time, mark the degradations of the revolutionary government under its several popular denominations, or the errors of the neighbouring powers, in treating all the misfortunes of France as the effects of deliberate crimes. This, however, would be the most useful history of the French revolution; and as the several points of degradation will occur in our discussions, we shall be under the necessity of

of giving this history: but now we must leave them behind us.

Until the extinction of the DIRECTORY, the civil and military powers had been kept distinct; and it has often appeared wonderful that CARNOT did not unite them in himself.

The profligate venality of BARRAS, succeeding the crimes and follies of his predecessors, was rendering the government null; the Austrians and Prussians were penetrating the country; when three plans for a dictatorship were proposed—that of SEYES for MOREAU, SEYES to be GRAND ELECTOR; that of SEMONVILLE for JOUBERT, his son-in-law; and that of JOSEPH and LUCIEN BONAPARTE, for NAPOLEON BONAPARTE. MARET moved from party to party. The sudden death of Joubert, and the appearance of Napoleon Bonaparte, threw the principal conspirators into dismay. To secure their object, it was necessary to accuse and execute Bonaparte for desertion. But the government was expiring—Moreau was with the army, and his ambition was purely military. They therefore united in converting a necessity

into a virtue, and they hailed BONAPARTE as the missioned Saviour of France.

BONAPARTE, after some manœuvres*, in which his personal courage appeared doubtful, seized a power which had been dishonoured by crimes and follies of an astonishing nature; and he seems disposed to use it, not only for the chastisement of the French nation, but for that of a considerable portion of the human race.

TURGOT.

Egeria does not mark the degradation of France sufficiently, when Bonaparte was first noticed by Barras; and the humiliating condition on which he obtained any important employment.

EGERIA.

* When he was driven out of the hall of the council at St. Cloud, he met General Lasnes, and exclaimed, "It is all over, I am out-lawed, (hors de la Loi!) No, No, said Lasnes, you are only out of the hall, (hors de la Salle:) draw your sword, and you will see what we may do." They entered, followed by soldiers, and the PUBLIC WILL of France became the private will of Napoleon Bonaparte. On such tenures, do the fates of millions depend!!

If those tales be true, they are not important; for the highest offices and the greatest fortunes have been obtained on similar conditions. The military talents of the man were known, and the most curious fact in his distressed situation is, the revolutionary government was so completely exhausted, that a young Corsican, in a lodging of eight livres a week, from which he was in hourly danger of being expelled for want of payment, received deputations from the directory and the sections of Paris, then in open hostility; and that he deliberated some time, whether he should command the armed populace of the sections against the directory, or the troops of the directory against the sections.

His resolution, and its consequences, are known*. Petty causes, the intrigues of women, &c. are for scandalous chronicles and poetical satires, not for philosophical and useful history.

The

* One of his stipulations was an instantaneous advance of money, to put himself in a decent dress. This circumstance is not mentioned as reproachful to Bonaparte, but to shew the condition into which contending factions had reduced France.

The condition of the country demanded a popular military chief; it possessed no man, near the revolutionary arena, who had abilities and virtue to confine the talents of such a chief to their proper province. He was tamely suffered to seize the civil as well as military power; and to have the disposal and command of numerous armies, formed by long services and able leaders, by which he might extinguish every spark of liberty in France; and wage war, on Roman principles and Roman views, on the independence and liberties of the greater part of the world.

The nation was stupified, the populace of Paris was subdued; and every thing in France was at the disposal of a few unprincipled intriguers, who had escaped the storms of anarchy. The artifices of Seyes were exhausted; but having a reputation for the manufacture of that species of political constitutions, which served as veils to all revolutionary impostures; his name and his assistance were expedient; and men inferior to him in the reputation of artifice, knew how to convert him to their purposes, and disencumber

disencumber themselves of him when those purposes were answered.

He was therefore required to furnish one of those instruments of delusion, called a constitution; that outline was retraced by the Bonapartes, and so little did Seyes understand the meaning of his own phrases, that all those which might be employed by factions, even in the name of that liberty which had long expired, were expunged; and a constitution was displayed, which, with a few corrections, became perfectly and easily manageable, as a masque for the most unshackled despotism.

In this transaction, Seyes lost the spurious reputation he had been acquiring in ten years, and obtained the great object of his wishes, considerable wealth *; but he betrayed into the

 hands

* Seyes is not only a conservative senator, but the first of the fifty who are to be invested with landed property for life, the income of which will be of equal amount with the present senatorial salary. He has purchased an estate and chateau at Marli, and his income is moderately estimated at six thousand pounds sterling a year.

He affects a gloomy disapprobation of the usurpations of Bonaparte, but has resisted none of them in word or deed; and, on obtaining for one of his brothers the office of post-master-general;

hands of the faction of Bonaparte, the last faint hope of France to obtain some portion of liberty for all its sufferings and miseries.

The language of the usurpation was, at first, mild and popular. Every restraint, even the government itself, was to be temporary, and France was to be free in her own way, and according to her own choice, as soon as she could be pronounced in a capacity. France therefore bent her neck to the iron yoke, and bore her destined oppressor to those victories, and that glory which have enabled him to trample on all her dearest rights.

general; and for the other, that of superintendant of the national forests, he has returned to his chateau, contented with his prizes, though accompanied with loud execrations of those who had been deceived by his pretensions to great abilities and virtues.

(To be continued.)

EGERIA.

SIXTEENTH STUDY.

CONSULAR LESSONS CONTINUED.

——et omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset.—Tac.

EGERIA.

The French nation, which had suffered the most interesting pages of its revolutionary history to be stained with the direst atrocities, was prepared for any measures which a military chief, possessing absolute authority, could adopt.

Bonaparte, an adept in the glittering language and profound hypocrisy of revolutionary parti-

sans, had impressed France with a general hope, that in concentrating the civil and military powers, he had in view the examples of the Saxon Alfred, or the American Washington; and that his purpose was to introduce liberty, as the effect of order.

Plants and animals transform themselves from one organization to another, by a process, which extinguishes the one the moment the other is formed. The French reformers had failed in their political constitutions, being driven by turbulent factions to anticipate that moment.

The victories of Bonaparte threw a lurid radiance over an ensanguined country, which was mistaken for the dawn of that freedom so long and so ardently sought.

The best forms of revolutionary administration yielded to those collective bodies which had an interest in their dissolution; and all efforts proved ineffectual, because they were injudicious in some material circumstance, to support the administration by the force of the whole community, to which all other forces are secondary and subservient. By involving the civil

civil in the military government, the consulate, from its superior organization, possessed a power superior to that of the whole community: the people, therefore, instantly sunk into absolute slavery. For the laws, if the edicts of despotism can be called laws, will be arbitrary respecting the people, and no real attention will be paid to the public, when government has no apprehension from its opinion or its force.

CÆSAR.

But are not successful chiefs rendered tyrants by ill-fame? I was murthered, not for acts of despotism, but for possessing its powers.

ÆGERIA.

Can Cæsar produce an instance where such power has been either usurped or conferred, without rendering its possessor an oppressive monster?

The manner in which the Consular government of France divested itself of the first powers it had assumed, and put on others less equi-

vocal; the insults offered to a degraded people, by holding out its arrangements and its will, for a choice, on which the nation had not even the permission to hesitate; the extinction of the Liberty of the Press; and the prescribed forms of study and enquiry allotted to genius and learning in all literary institutes and schools—announced to France a condition of the deepest humiliation, in the degradations of political slavery.

NEWTON.

Tyrants happily mistake the species of knowlege most dangerous to their usurpations. On the revival of letters in Europe, they assassinated, massacred, executed, and burned, moral and political enquirers; but connived at, and even contributed to form, improve, and simplify the Algebraic language; not perceiving its indirect and ultimate influence on their power. Despots cannot secure their authority without an indiscriminate and absolute suppression of all scientific investigation. The human mind, to be enslaved, should in no respect be illumined.

It is happy this truth is not perceived, or that it cannot be acted upon, by despots, and, in the present state of military discipline, several important branches of general science are necessary to the views of despotism. In enmity to the diffusion of knowledge, the French Consulate surpasses all the tyrannies of the earth.

The public schools and institutes are forbidden all moral and political pursuits; all appointments must have the actual approbation, and all public and private feeling is absorbed in the will of the Consul.

This I felt the moment I entered the country; where every stranger is treated as a spy, and where the government would not be divested of its suspicion, if France and its appendages were surrounded by an impregnable wall, and all their entrances were offices of the most jealous examination. The jargon of liberty, equality, and republicanism, retained in their official papers, renders the vexatious processes of despotism, sometimes more oppressive, sometimes more

tolerable by provocations to ridicule and laughter. The universal prevalence of suspicion, and the most profound silence respecting the government in general conversations, were decisive symptoms to me of its character; and France is the only country I have ever traversed, and France only at this period, where I never heard the name of its first magistrate voluntarily alluded to or mentioned.

If I had wished only to ascertain the loss of liberty, this fact would have afforded me the melancholy conviction.

But my principal object was, to form some judgment of the effect of this government on the peace and prosperity of other nations; and particularly on those of England, where political institutions have been long in a state of progression, and where, if any where in Europe, a condition of political and civil liberty may be obtained.

That despotism should have succeeded anarchy, in France, was in the necessary order of things; and the institution of the Consulate, with all its first powers, would have been a subject

ject of immortal admiration, if its temporary conditions had been observed. But the modes taken to render null, not only the senate, tribunate, and legislature, but all organs and vehicles of public sentiment and public will; the absorption of all political and civil power into the will of the First Consul; and the power of transferring that unexampled despotism to any successor at his pleasure, fill the mind of the observer, as they impress the nation of France with melancholy despondence; from which it may be occasionally roused, by the dazzling progresses of its master, or by projects of false glory, in military expeditions, either for predatory purposes, or to extinguish in Europe all those embers of liberty, to the slightest emanations of which the sensibility of recent despotism is ever exquisitely alive.

If the Consulate of France had possessed talents and virtues suited to its powers, it might have conferred on Europe and on humanity the most important blessings.

They who contrived this enormous power

were not ignorant of those trains of movements which obeyed the general sensibility, and which are, in all cases, informations of the national will. It was in their power to have associated them, and to have given force to those parts which were subservient to the general judgment, and which had been thrown by anarchy into broken and indefinite actions.

No: it has been the late destiny of France to render every epoch disastrous, apparently destined for the revival of light, and the restoration of happiness. Instead of suffocating that revolutionary and infernal genius, which domineers only in darkness and destruction, it is contrived that every event shall irritate it into barbarian ferocity, and stimulate it with the boldest and most unlimited pretensions, to march in the blood and tears of Europe, to precipitate all its nations into a common abyss of slavery.

In this infernal design, the most refined intrigues are diligently employed. The infirmities of all courts are discovered, and even the panders of illicit pleasures are the venal instruments of

of consular negociations. The object is to effect in Europe a general disagreement of disorganised states; that Bonaparte, like the evil genius of discord and destruction, may preside in the dreadful conflict of derangements.

On this account every occasion is seized, particularly in the partitions of Germany, and in the invasion and plunder of its states *, to destroy all balance of power; to interfere with the rights of reciprocal inspection by the reciprocal admission of envoys †; and to reduce Europe under the Roman system of provincial slavery, governed by hordes of disciplined banditti, where every thing will be extorted from disarmed labour and industry by armed hypocrisy ‡ and villainy; where nations will be contended for as tygers contend for flocks of sheep; where, after the sacrifice of millions, one fortunate assassin may prevail, his glory acquired by murder and rapine; and the will of a sin-

* Hanover, &c.

† Switzerland is forbidden to receive an envoy from Britain.

‡ The French armies always plunder for the relief and the liberty of the plundered nations.

a single barbarian may be the law of half the globe.

From the first day of the usurpation of Bonaparte, the disposition of national events has been in this train. Lucien Bonaparte said, coarsely and impudently in his circumstances, the French nation is made to be kicked, and it shall be kicked.

France, in all its passions, is disposed to excess and idolatry. When Louis XV. dishonoured by imbecilities and vices, returned from Metz, where he had been dangerously ill, the people of Paris kissed his horse, and his boots, and led him in triumph to his palace.

It is not therefore wonderful that a general so fortunate as Bonaparte, whose successes had consequences so splendid, and which might have been so beneficial, should have been mistaken for a wise and great man; and that all possible honours should have been laid at his feet. But Bonaparte returned error for error; seeing the nation humbled, he conceived himself its superior—a part greater than the whole *.

He

* πλεον ημισυ παντος—a Greek paradox.

He therefore gradually appropriated the attributes of divinity. He bestrode France as Theagenes bestrode the Golden Ass *. Cardinals bearing palm-branches, (some of them concealing serpents †,) and offering incense as to the Tutelar Deity ‡, sanctified his extravagant pretensions.

The

* Vide Apuleius.

† In the ceremony of reinstating the Catholic religion.

‡ In the private conclave of *Malmaison*, where the women of the *Great Family* have considerable influence, it was proposed that the puppet should be borne as a God by priests, and that some allegorical sacrifices, in the costumes of the surrounding nations, where peace and the arts had been *conquered*, should be offered him on an appropriated altar. But Rederer hinted, that public allusions would be made to the Goddess of Reason ; and it is said, he kicked Rederer. The protecting genius frequently threatens to kick his ministers, while they are servilely labouring to hold the people by a chain.

Human nature never appears so degraded as when nations are prostrated before such tyrants.

Caligula, who, like Bonaparte, ruled by an army, summoned the Roman senate at midnight to see him dance ; proposed his horse for the Consulship ; obliged them to vote solemn sacrifices, as the French vote addresses, to eternize his clemency for not murdering them, which, he said, he had the power of doing.

The senate of Rome, and even the municipal towns and colonies, deified the emperors while committing the most infamous debaucheries, and execrable cruelties, as may be seen on many of the medals of the monster Commodus.

There

The influence of a general fear of anarchy, on the passions of the people, produces a quiescent equilibrium, like the pressure of gravity on fluids; which is mistaken for peace.

But what are the effects even of anarchy compared with the silent, unrelenting, and perpetual agony, in which the nation is held by an absolute despotism?

The twenty-two deputies were executed in thirty minutes; the priests in the Loire were instantly drowned; Collot d'Herbois shot the people of Lyons; and the wars of La Vendée were rapid massacres. All these unhappy persons

There are medals of Pertinax, with symbols of joy and liberty, and the inscriptions Lætitia Temporum, and Libertatis Civibus. These should be deposited at the Louvre as instructive monuments of slavery.

There is a medal to the Tyrant Maximinus, as to the best of Princes. The inscription, S. P. Q. R. Optimo Principi.

There is also a medal with the figure of Rome presenting Victory to Gallienus, with the inscription Romæ Æternæ, when the provinces were infested by barbarians, and occupied by thirty tyrants.

On the reverse of a Marius we have PACATOR ORBIS, though he reigned but three days. What must the GREAT PACIFICATOR deserve, who would *crush* Europe into an eternal peace?

sons were sacrificed after short imprisonments. In the dungeons and cells of state prisons, all of which are nearly filled by Bonaparte, without process, judgment, or even a lettre de cachet, thousands are committed to hopeless despondence; and if the offensive lights of liberty on the side of Britain could be extinguished, France would become the prison of all its inhabitants, regulated and tormented by the caprices of its Citizen-Gaoler.

On those lights the views of the Consulate have been ever fixed.

Two plans were deemed practicable: The one to seduce the British ministry into an association for the suppression of all ideas and means of future resistance to the most unlimited exercise of established powers.

With this object in view, the Consul opened an immediate correspondence with his Majesty; and some finesse was used to introduce the name, family, and honours of Bonaparte, and his family, among those of the royal houses of Europe, in the English court calendar *.

The

* Not having succeeded in England, he ordered English paper

The reception of the British Plenipotentiary, and of all the gentlemen in his suite, and the hints and intimations given them, excited strong suspicions in the minds of the real friends of liberty in France, that Britain would be comprehended in a conspiracy against the possibility of recovering that liberty. But this failed; and the scheme of forming a party in parliament, by caressing and flattering the leaders of opposition, also failing, no hope was left but in hostilities; for which the French nation were to be prepared by misrepresentations of a subject which might easily be misrepresented, as it is not understood either by the literati, or by the people of France.

Commerce received its birth in Britain, as in all other countries, under disadvantages, from the misapprehensions and errors of government, which

paper and types into Paris, where he employed an Englishman to print seven thousand copies of the British Court Calendar, in the English language; where all the honours of the Consular Family are duly specified by the Consul himself; and the calendar has been distributed through Europe as the court calendar of St. James's.

which gradually formed it into a mysterious and cunning art.

As the principles of the government have been improved, and the real interests of the public have been understood; commerce has gradually assumed its honourable and useful character: and a little time would have unshackled Britain from all the material inconveniences, which are inconveniences principally to herself of monopolies and restrictions.

But France, the near neighbour, and the powerful competitor of Britain, is much less advanced in real knowledge of the subject; and instead of profiting by her example; renders all the disadvantages of her early and necessary expedients in forming commercial establishments, the subjects of crimination, and the pretences of hostility.

Commerce, therefore, in the intercourses of France and Britain, has been contention for inordinate advantages, and for inflicting reciprocal deprivations, instead of the equitable diffusion of enjoyments conferred by nature, with apparent inequality, to produce a general intercourse,

course, and to render universal happiness the work of man.

France, however, has not in any period of her history, professed principles and doctrines so hostile to her own interests, as well as to the interests of Europe, as those which distinguish the Corsican Consulate.

A profligate ambition and avarice, present without scruple, those false scales by which all sense of proportional relations are confounded. Selfishness, personal and national, is substituted for equity; and fraud, injustice, oppression and tyranny, are the Consular laws of Nations. Hence the depredations and wars of France on all feeble states; and all the crimes and miseries with which she has terrified and afflicted the continent.

Britain has hitherto evaded both her intrigues and her violence; but, like the ravenous wolf, her howl has long been heard. She has drained all the surrounding states; and disdaining the industry which might render her territory the most fruitful, and the most happy in the world, she substitutes the spirit and habits of depre-

depredation, and disciplines numerous armies for the purposes of universal robbery.

Britain, the richest nation of Europe, the government has proposed for her richest booty.

Truces, treaties, and pacifications, have been only administered as opiates. War, the greatest and most extensive of all human calamities, is the native, the favourite element, of the French Consulate; and though it may affect to treat and negociate, its determination has ever been, that all differences are to be referred to war, because they become interminable but with the slavery or the destruction of its opponents.

Differences insignificant in themselves, have, therefore, by their multiplication, been swollen into importance; every petty artifice has been used to estrange the two nations, best calculated for mutual instruction and benefit; and to render all the means of intellectual and commercial communication difficult and unattainable.

War is therefore declared—for the possession of Malta? No. For Egypt? No. For the liberties of Holland and Switzerland? No. Considerations relating to these subjects may

have had their weight; but the cause of war is that of the perpetual hostility between robbery and industry, and to ward from Bonaparte, for a time, the affliction that befell Alexander, who wept that he could not subdue, desolate and enslave another world.

EGERIA.

SEVENTEENTH STUDY.

CONSULAR LESSONS, CONCLUDED.

In commune non consulunt—dum singuli pugnant, omnes vincuntur.

EGERIA.

PERHAPS there is no single circumstance so characteristic of despotism, as the perpetual fear with which it is haunted.

The French Government *, of all the instances of this nature which I have seen or

* The word Government is used, in the common ſenſe. The French nation has lately had no civil government, justly so denominated. Anarchy and despotism are the absence of civil government.

read of, is the most remarkable and the most miserable.

Considering the peculiar perfidy of the usurpation, and its unprincipled use of despotic power, the attempts on the life of Bonaparte have not been so numerous and so bold as might have been expected, from a people accustomed to the various enterprizes and hazards of a sanguinary revolution.

They have been, however, more numerous than Europe is aware of: for it has been his policy to conceal all attempts which were not notorious, and which he could not render the occasion of plausible criminations of Britain; the country he has ever dreaded and abhorred, as the mirror, reflecting his exact image in the view of France. He, however, neither eats nor drinks, nor sleeps, nor moves on any occasion, without precautions, which prove, that assassination is every moment present to his mind.

This is a species of justice, for which nature seems to have provided, in the constitution of the human mind *.

It

* Metus in Auctorem redit.—Senec. Œdip, v. 705.

It was the hourly punishment of Robespierre, which he aggravated by the horrible means he employed to remove it; and it is so obviously the torment of Bonaparte, that it is scarcely possible a man should approach him, without being reminded by some gesture or some circumstance, of that event, for which there will soon be but one wish in Europe.

It is in vain, that houses, kitchens, cellars, are rendered subject to the strictest attentions of military guards *: it is in vain, that every region around him is rendered a desart: nothing seems to soothe his apprehensions, or to obliterate the remembrance of the evils he has occasioned. He seems ever to hear the groans of misery; and when uttering the words of Peace, which are generally on his lips, he seems to feel the pangs that sooner or later await all those who delight in slaughter; who feel no pity in

* In his tours, while every thing externally wears the masque of confidence and joy, the families even of the Prefects, at whose houses he lodges, are excluded by soldiers from all access to the offices where any thing destined for the use of the Consul is prepared.

the career of false glory; who hear without remorse the aged groan in death, or mothers begging for their mangled children; and who procure splendid years of horror, by being the execrated scourges of the human race.

With professions of equity and justice, the policy of this man is that of Romulus, Mahomet, and all the ferocious leaders of military banditti, who have covered with renown, the fixed purpose of rendering the labour and industry of mankind tributary to the sword.

Paris is becoming like Rome, the focus of plausible but infernal pretences, for infusing reciprocal suspicion dread and terror, among all the surrounding nations, and for interfering in all their transactions.

This will open passages to its super-abundant and vicious population, transformed into inexhaustible successions of predatory armies; which, like swarms of locusts, will multiply by the evils they inflict, and cover all Europe with oppression and desolation. This is the tendency of their present mode of interference, and of all their maxims of political alliance; all the faculties

ties of the country allying, being absorbed in the will of the French government, and all its resources at its disposal.

Every thing like national society, or the law of nations, will be obliterated, if the French armies succeed in their plan of general subjugation; and there will be no civil law properly so called in Europe, and no principle of political action, but such as may be dictated, solicited, or purchased, at the Divan of the Tuilieries.

This is a condition not to be envied, even for France. Instead of draining her marshes, exploring her mines, and cultivating her soil for an extended and happy population, she becomes the general centre of the most deplorable slavery, and sends forth her people in all directions to seek plunder and glory in the paths of murther and devastation; at the will of a man, who emulates the sanguinary glories of Timur-beg or Aurungzebe, and rejoices only in such desolations and convulsions as attend the dissolution of human societies.

The slightest motive of this man's caprice may involve France in a general massacre, or

produce a devastation of the greater part of Europe! A petty monster! whose sudden production, against the general wish and interest of a powerful and enlightened nation, seems unaccountable, wields the French army, as death doth its scythe, and mows millions of human beings at his pleasure.

Is this a condition to be endured by France, or by the surrounding nations? The annals of Tartary and Arabia, where rapine and murther are the national resources, scarcely furnish such humiliating degradations. The domineering French, like their models the Turks, constitute in every country subjugated by their arms or their alliances, the most detestable because the most oppressive species of aristocracy; that of a licentious army, whose rapacity and oppressions are unchecked by any sentiments of decency or humanity *.

COLBERT.

Europe does not seem sensible of these dangers you describe. Nay, to judge by its diplomatic acts, it seems more inclined to seize the occa-

* The Italians revenge them by assassination and poison; of which the French Government takes no public notice.

occasion of checking the naval power of Britain, than to protect itself against the projected territorial dominion of France.

EGERIA.

This is not the only occasion, on which the cabinets of nations have inverted the prudential maxim, and "of two evils chosen the greatest."

The pretensions of Britain to "rule the waves," are in the abstract, like those to "rule the air," which may be asserted when the art of guiding balloons is perfected.

That high degree of power which accompanies such superiority as that of the navy of Britain, is seldom without abuses; but when understood they are offensive to the general feeling of Britain, the only nation in Europe where the public mind really influences the government.

COLBERT.

Why have they not been relinquished? or why have they been so equivocally modified?

EGERIA.

Because Mars has been the umpire, who always leaves a question in a worse state than he finds it.

COLBERT.

Has there not been an ARMED NEUTRALITY? and is there not, at this time, a disposition to renew it?

EGERIA.

The armed neutrality of Catherine II. was formed in hostility, and intended to take advantage of the embarrassments of Britain in the American war: it therefore terminated in forced and equivocal concessions.

The present project would add the highest political folly to the most ungenerous hostility; it is a snare, which the government of France has spread for the northern powers; and the success of an armed neutrality would immediately involve them in the general slavery intended for Europe.

COLBERT.

I do not understand how the removal of an evil would be attended with such consequences.

EGERIA.

Thou art sufficiently acquainted with history to know that the removal of an evil may be attended

tended with greater evil. The naval power of Britain is not an evil in itself, but may be in its occasional abuses: those abuses have produced armed neutralities, and temporary regulations; but if the insidious policy, or the corrupting measures of France, were to succeed with the northern powers, and the question of the freedom of the seas were assimilated with the interests and ambition of Bonaparte, who has nearly subjugated the Continent—what would be the consequence of victory? Will any considerate mind suppose it could be the liberty sought for? Though the French government might not realize its absurd project of transferring to France the commerce and naval power of Britain, which are produced and sustained by causes peculiar to itself, the French navy would receive a considerable accession; and remaining without a rival and without restraint, would rule the waves with the same despotism it displays on the Continent. Is this the purpose of the armed neutrality, or of the efforts of nations for the freedom of the seas?

COLBERT.

COLBERT.

No, certainly.

EGERIA.

But it would certainly be the consequence of success. The governments associated with France would have the fate of the animals who hunted with the lion, and would lose all ideas of advantageous or equitable participation in the immediate prospect of their own destruction—Denmark, Sweden, and even Russia, would be instantly subjected to naval and commercial oppressions, as numerous and destructive as those political and territorial mandates, from the Sovereign of the Gauls, who would then be the Sovereign of the World, which now cover with humiliations and miseries the *liberated* and *fraternised* Republics of Italy, Switzerland, and Holland.

It is therefore surprizing the American government should have ever expressed an inclination to the decision of this question by force.

COLBERT.

I thought the American government carefully

abstained from all interference in the present contest.

EGERIA.

Such are its general professions—but the language of many of its envoys, consuls, agents, merchants, &c. has been in favour of the decision of the question, by taking advantage of any of the difficult situations of Britain: their advice at this time would have consequences similar to that of their predecessors in 1789, in favour of political liberty *. The object of the armed neutrality, which, as far as it is practicable, may be obtained by other means and at another time,

would

* The opinion entertained in America of the principles and views of the French government, was clearly shewn in the purchase of Louisiana; which would not have been sold by Bonaparte, if he could have conveniently thrown America into the English scale, with the prospect of a war; for the people of America would have commenced hostilities without the permission of its government, to prevent the settlement of the French in Louisiana; of whose ambition and intrigues they were apprized.

By that settlement it was the intention of Bonaparte, or rather of Talleyrand, to fix a thorn in the side of America, which would have kept it in a state of irritation, and generated petty wars, preparatory to a grand attempt for its annexation to the universal empire of the Gauls.

would be totally lost to Europe, if the French government were at this time enabled to conquer it —for in all cases, with France, the rights of conquest are licences of abuse, tyranny and oppression.

I appeal, on this subject, to the candour of Benjamin Franklin, whose attention I perceive to be particularly engaged.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

It was always one of my objects to induce my countrymen to profit peaceably by the forced direction given to commerce by the government of Britain, with views (true or false) to its own security.

The British system of enforcing exportations and importations; its regulations concerning the transit-trade, depot, and entrepot, were to me then, as they appear now, of doubtful, some of them clearly of pernicious policy: I consider them, however, as errors, founded on favourite and established, but illusive theories, which have hitherto resisted the collective abilities of the most enlightened nation in the universe.

Such philosophers as Talleyrand and Bonaparte

parte would apply the sword to this gordian knot; and I am sorry to say, such republican courtiers, as some of my successors in France, without pledging the American government to assist, would stimulate and encourage European measures; from which American speculators might derive temporary advantages; the success of which, under the direction of France, would extinguish all the real and salutary principles of commerce. Those principles have originated in Britain; they are gradually dissipating its errors, and are adopted by other nations without the inconveniences attending their first growth. If the despotism of the seas were united and assimilated with that of the European Continent, under the military Chieftain of the Gauls, that Chieftain would soon find reasons and claims, in despotism itself, for its extension to the commerce, and, perhaps, to the dominion of America.

The pretended policy with which America, as well as France, is tainted, originates in an unextinguished spirit of resentment; and is therefore blind to the enlightened principles which should

should direct the commercial interests of nations. Those interests consist in the cultivation of different, not of rival productions and manufactures; because the various regions of the world can become in no other method really opulent in their respective productions; and commerce the equitable interchange of those productions.

I am therefore sorry for the language of any American envoys or agents, when the evident object of the government of France is to involve the questionable parts of British policy in a contest with which they have no relation, and to induce the powers of Europe to unite in hostilities against the only bulwark of their liberties, by SEA as well as by LAND.

American envoys may have only wished to display their talents as courtiers, in adopting the jargon of the consular court on *forcing* and *conquering*, things unsusceptible of conquest, if by conquest be meant transfer, and not destruction.

I hope for a more enlightened policy, under the administration of JEFFERSON; and that the American

American government may distinguish itself in promoting those other means of obtaining the wishes of mankind, to which Egeria alludes, and which may still be adopted.

COLBERT.

What are those means? And when will the time arrive for the use of them?

EGERIA.

Perhaps no period of time can be more favourable than the present; the means may be of difficult attainment; for an ARMED ARBITRATION on the Continent, should accompany, if not precede an ARMED NEUTRALITY on the seas. If Europe do not unite to compel the actions of the government of France within such limits as may ensure her perfect independence and liberty, as a member of the great European society, but not as its tyrant; if France renounce not her habits of predatory enterprize, and the disposition to improve her condition by the sword, rather than by labour and industry; if a numerous and disciplined people be suffered

fered in the centre of Europe, to support an indefinite and vicious population, and to pamper its wildest fancies and most depraved passions, by the oppression and pillage of other nations; it would be folly to attend to the proposed objects of an ARMED NEUTRALITY. For the effect of a perpetual exposure to invasion and plunder, on the most important and productive labours, and on the existence of civil society, would soon produce the annihilation of commerce, and convert the claims of neutrals into the duties of tributary slaves.

It is to be feared the powers of Europe, Russia and Prussia particularly, may not perceive in time, that the present government of France, which has arisen on the ruins of kingdoms, subsists in a great measure by the pillage of dethroned Princes, and that the system which would insure the submission of all Europe, to the ambition of Bonaparte, or the venality of Talleyrand, is the most execrable that has ever been formed.

Away then, for the present, with such petty objects as the freedom of neutral bottoms, and the

limitations of naval search. Britain has a greater interest in the most liberal determinations on these subjects than any other nation—but she cannot suddenly divest herself of the *disadvantages* of her own errors, or abolish institutions at once, the effects of which to herself are mingled with injuries. All these evils, however, are rapidly correcting themselves; and though in some cases they embarrass, they are on the whole advantageous to other nations *. But the military system of France produces predatory armies, the drains of an unchecked population, whose numbers will be multiplied by the miseries they occasion, until they have devoured the fruits of the general labour and industry of Europe!—War, like every other species of violence, punishes errors by crimes, and corrects evils by inflicting calamities.

The real principles of peace and the real laws of justice will not speedily take place, unless Europe

* The Americans, who frequently and loudly complain of English monopoly, consume East-India commodities 50 per cent. cheaper than the English; because they freely participate a trade, which the English were obliged to establish by monopoly.

rope have the wisdom and courage to adopt an ARMED ARBITRATION that shall suspend all acts of violence; adjudge and determine national questions, and by protecting the weak from injustice, cut off the general sources of war.

Like all political institutions, this high power would encounter difficulties; be abused, influenced, and corrupted: but these would be slight and temporary inconveniences, like the indispositions of infancy, which stimulate the human constitution to exertion, firmness, and vigour.

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